

Sketching Rambles in Holland



by
GEO. COLEMAN
AND
A. R. A.

& E. A. Abbey.



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SKETCHING RAMBLES IN HOLLAND

By George H. Boughton, A.R.A.

With illustrations by the Author
and Edwin A. Abbey

NEW YORK
HARPER & BROTHERS, FRANKLIN SQUARE

1885

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ONE OF THEM.

To Edwin A. Abbey.

My fellow-rambler and fellow sketcher,
 To whose delightful companionship
 May be set down any extra washes
 Of "couleur de rose". That may be discovered
 in these pages by the cold, sad cynic
 Whose good fortune it had never been
 To ramble and sketch with such a perfect
 fellow-traveller -- this writing is inscribed

Geo. H. Boughton.

West House.

Camden Hill Road
 London. W.

“QUI S'EXCUSE S'ACCUSE.”

By Way of Preface,

I HAVE first set down the above wholesome maxim. It may check any wayward tendency within me to apologize beyond the full extent of any sin of commission or omission I may have been guilty of in writing this book.

It might have been more to the interest and profit of the reader had the partner of these sketching rambles presented me, and explained my peculiar position in this, our joint effort. Knowing however, as well I do, his persistent and sometimes tiresome modesty, I feel that I have little hope of aid from his quarter. I must explain my unwonted appearance here as an author as best I may, not forgetting to premise that if there be any appreciable amount of credit to this, our production, I am not loath to take my fair share of it, while he, dear fellow, will be apt to make it unpleasant all round should he not have more than his share of any blame that may fall to us.

When my friend first proposed that I should join him in a vagarious “wander” over the “untrodden ways” of unfrequented Holland, the alluring scheme included in the party a certain writer of charming sketches of travel and of just such roving as we proposed to enjoy.

My young friend’s mission was either to illustrate the writer’s impressions, or the writer purposed following the facile pencil

with his graceful pen. Any way, it was to be "A rare good time," and I need not say with what alacrity I accepted an invitation to "come along and throw in a sketch or two."

After having been in Holland about a week with only my sketching companion, it occurred to me to inquire after our author. I then learned, not without a momentary pang, that he had been unavoidably detained in England and could not join us just then; we were to meet him later on at some place in North Holland. I did not pursue my inquiries to the verge of indiscretion. So long as I was absorbing all my own share and part of the absent one's of the prevailing "Good Time," I allowed my light-hearted friend and sketcher to banish whatever regret the "unavoidable circumstance" might call for. But as we meandered on through the placid, dreamy lowland landscapes of Cuyp and Ruysdael, even into far North Holland, never did we descry on the horizon's farthest verge a single bright speck that told the coming of the mislaid author.

Something definite ought to be done: sketches were accumulating; experiences were delighting and even teaching us; impressions were weighing us down—and the results were in danger of mildewing for want of proper literary preservation.

We wandered about weighed down by the sad conviction that we had been culpably careless in not securing our author before we came away. It was only after chastening our proud spirits with a few days' light and genial suffering in the minor dead and dying cities of the Zuider Zee that we became at all reconciled to our loss; or that either of us had the unblushing humility to suggest that, after all, such writing as need be done we might attempt ourselves!

Gradually, as the astounding impertinence of this idea lost

the charm of novelty, we began to see the responsibility and magnitude of the task we had been so ready to undertake. Then it was that each became so willing, nay, even anxious, that the *other* should have all the fun and glory of the writing all to himself. The retiring, modest soul would assist now and then when called upon, etc. It was finally settled, by some odd or even chance, that I should do the book on the above pleasant understanding. And thus it is that I find myself straying into "fresh woods and pastures new," where perhaps I have earned no right to tread. It is a very pleasant field, no doubt; but I have no wish to skip about with the shorn lambs in the untempered wind longer than is good for me. To the first angry shout of the watchful shepherd, "Now, then, where are *you* going to?" I am quite ready to reply, "*I'm* going back again!"

I need not apologize specially for the various little errors, descriptive and statistical, which these pages doubtless contain. I did not yearn to write a guide-book, there are such good ones already in the field. I have only tried to give the impressions day by day that one of the most quaint and artist-beloved countries in the world made upon us. I will in no way warrant that the next rambles will see *our* things; or, if they do, that they will see them as we saw them. If they will only write down their views, however, as fairly as I have tried to do mine, I promise to read even a flat contradiction of me with the deepest complacency, and even a certain degree of positive pleasure.

G. H. BOUGHTON.

WEST HOUSE, CAMPDEN HILL, LONDON, W., MAY, 1884.

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~~Sketching Rambles in Holland~~

SKETCHING RAMBLES IN HOLLAND.

CHAPTER I.

OFF FOR NORTH HOLLAND.

A VERY large opal or the inside of a mother-of-pearl shell would make a good background for this thin strip of distant Holland that lies blinking away in the early morning light. A long, narrow ribbon of a picture it makes, with its little spots and dots and splashes of color here and there, accidental here and methodical there, as if part of a pattern. By carefully looking through a glass, these dots of various shapes and sizes soon resolve themselves into windmills, cows, sheep, Dutchmen, churches, and steeples, and little red-tiled houses, with green or blue shutters. I do not pretend that this is a peculiar or striking instance of the first glimpse of a foreign strand, with its cows, windmills, and steeples—I know of other such places—but I contend that the Dutch sand-slip is cleaner than any other that there is, the cows are sleeker and fatter, the windmills more jaunty and active, the cottages more spick-and-span and more recently out of a toy-box, the specks of humanity more rotund and well-to-do. Never, except on some other strip of Dutch strand, will you see just such specks as these. And as we draw nearer the shore, and the bits of

color take more definite form, there is no mistake—this is Holland, and no other land at all.

Flushing is still in the dim, hazy distance. It is the luminous haze of an early autumnal morning at sunrise. Such a morning and such a scene are well worth coming these few miles to see, even if we see nothing else, and take the returning boat back to England. I don't mean to compare it to an Alpine sunrise, in order to give the preference either way. The charm of this particular sunrise is its unexpectedness: it was not down in the programme. We had not been preparing for it for days; we had bribed no one to wake us at some unholy hour; we had not made the hour more unholy still by strong language against all mountains, sunrises, guides, and the people concerned in turning us out into the marrow-chilling mists, eyes blinking and teeth a-chatter, with no deeper wish than that it were done with, and we could go to breakfast.

We had come from London by the Queensborough and Flushing route. The vessels are, no doubt, the largest and finest that cross that ever-vexed bit of sea, which often tries the inner consciousness more than the Atlantic itself. One great charm of this route is that you glide peacefully down the Thames for miles, and are safe in your berth and, haply, asleep before the ship begins her playful skipping over the Channel waves. The chances are that you reach this quiet bit of water on the other side before you wake. You do not bump about outside a harbor bar, either, just a few minutes before landing. There is time to compose one's self—if one has not rested well, to put it mildly—before facing the little ordeal of landing at an unearthly hour in a strange country. They give you a very good breakfast on board the steamer, and plenty of time for it, too, on that bit of smooth water. You reach Flushing in a good temper; and a good temper has very much to do with the truthful-

ness of first impressions. There is plenty of time, too, to note down our "first impressions" of this land flowing with milk—I am not sure about the honey, but certain about the butter and cheese, if they can be said to flow. Somebody has said that you do not "land" in Holland, but "go on board." That must have been written long before Flushing harbor was built, as that seems solid and substantial enough, however lightly moored the rest of the country may be behind it.

There are trains in waiting for all sorts of places, but there is no hurry. Never did we see the so-called express train in any unseemly haste in Holland. There is time and to spare for the pleasant farce of the custom-house examination. The official kindly selected the easiest thing to undo, and asked if we were going to stay in Holland or going farther on. Ere the straps were unbuckled fairly, he scuffled on his cabalistic chalk-mark, and we were free.

Some one fond of telling pleasant lies has said that with the English and French languages you can go anywhere in the Low Countries. But when one asks an intelligent railway official where the ticket-office is, and he looks puzzled, not to say pained, and we put the question in another form, and point to a crowd at the far end of the rambling station and say "Ticket-office?" and he says "Yes," and nods vigorously, and we rush off and find the refreshment-bar instead, it must be admitted that faith in the prevalence of English in Holland is somewhat shaken. However, as often happens, when the "trusted" fails, the "least expected" comes to the rescue. A newsboy of sixty summers, with an armful of jaw-dislocating Dutch morning papers, obligingly marshalled us the way that we were already going, in the direction of the other small crowd, which did mean tickets.

It is a sad thing to feel that you don't want the morning

paper. The titles were enough. I began to feel that I could not read at all. The newsboy was a godsend, however; he set aside all thought of disseminating early morning Dutch literature, and put his services as interpreter entirely at our disposal. He kindly prevented us from rewarding him too scantily for his services by explaining that the ten coins of rather good design and size, but dubious color, were only worth two-pence. We continued "paying out" (to use a combination of nautical and commercial terms) until a beam of satisfaction showed upon his weather-beaten countenance. It is a trying moment for a "happy-go-lucky" temperament to find itself early in the morning in a strange land, face to face with problems of a new and uncanny-looking currency. Two or three of the biggest of the coins won't go into any decent purse, and if left loose in the trousers pocket they go rasping and knocking about, setting the teeth on edge, and jamming the fingers that are in search of smaller coinage about the size of shirt-buttons. It seemed part of a liberal education to get up a knowledge of the intermediate specimens—combinations of copper, nickel, bronze, pewter, and silver. Still, it must be done; it would never do to go on paying away at this rate.

"We ought to have some sort of system. Suppose you pay for all, and we will settle up—"

"Some time," said the most careless of us to the most reckless (or the reverse, if he like it better). It cast a gloom of its own over us, and nearly settled us for the day.

The first impressions—which are supposed to be everything—of a new country, as seen from the bedrizzled windows of an express train, are not always worth writing down. It is only as you linger a few minutes at a wayside station that you begin to note the little differences that make it evident that you are at some distance from home. Many a hasty sketch

we made from the convenient end windows of the railway carriage, of the bits of character and incident seen on the platforms of the village stations. Such is the dignified repose of the Dutch that we could generally make a tolerably complete sketch before they moved. Seldom was the sketch-book out of hand, or the well-sharpened pencil unready.

If the study of the relative values of Dutch money is not cheering, it is not much relief to turn to the pages of a Dutch railway time-table. As we had been forced to admit the necessity of "some system" with regard to expenditure, we put off the evil day of arranging any very definite route until the morrow. We had two objective points—North Holland and Friesland—and so long as we came to these in good time, and by direct or indirect wanderings, the other places might arrange themselves as Time and happy Chance should will. We decided not to go straight on to Amsterdam the first day, but to break our journey at Haarlem.

Many artists consider this delightful old town as one of the greatest attractions in all Holland. To go to Holland and not to visit the shrine of Franz Hals is like going to Italy and leaving out Venice. On our way to Haarlem, however, we came to Dordrecht; and as all the delights of form and color of that most deeply dyed of all picturesque towns "wheeled into our ken," we began to loudly and bitterly lament that we were not to stop and explore them then and there. To our aid came a good-natured Dutch fellow-passenger, speaking English, who assured us that we could stop over three hours, and go on by the next train to Haarlem, and that our luggage, booked therefor, would be as safely awaiting us in the station as if we had never lost sight of it. No sooner said than done. A man and his luggage are as soon parted as the fool and his money. Our good-natured friend explained to the ticket-col-

lector — I fancy we had no real right to break the journey at Dort, but they seem curiously amiable on Dutch railways — and we passed out of the station and faced toward the town.

We did not respond to the pantomimic blandishments of the tram-car conductor, preferring to wander at our own sweet will, and get lost if possible. A very modern sort of Dutch villa, with a misbegotten little Mansard roof, plate-glass windows, muslin curtains of sprawling pattern, parted in the centre to display a cockety veneered table sustaining a basket of



ON THE EDGE OF HOLLAND.

wax fruit and a couple of sickly Parian statuettes, a small garden with paths of black cinders, surrounded with wood palings painted a rich arsenic green, and outside the palings a little, pathetic moat, covered with duck-weed, running entirely round the small domain, and around and over all an unmistakable bouquet of strangulated drainage — this was the first picture we stopped a moment to take in (mentally only). It was not exactly what we came on purpose to see, but we were not dismayed. Did we not see gleaming in

the distance the lovely tower of the cathedral, and the marvellous roofs of the old houses, tiled with every hue of soft, velvety red; towers, gables, and spires, with the golden weather-cocks, all looking like delicate tracery on the gray-blue sky beyond? Onward!

But, first of all, to restore the circulation, my companion indulged in a few steps of a darky dance, known among the select few as the "Essence of Ole Virginny." This, executed on the broad highway by a small, neat youth, nearly if not quite concealed by a monumental ulster, bristling with scores of uncanny flaps and pockets, brought a hitherto unseen and undreamed-of crowd of smiling but wondering natives up, seemingly from the ground.

"What on earth are they looking at? Is there anything peculiar about me or this ulster?"

"Nothing at all, my dear boy. Come on."

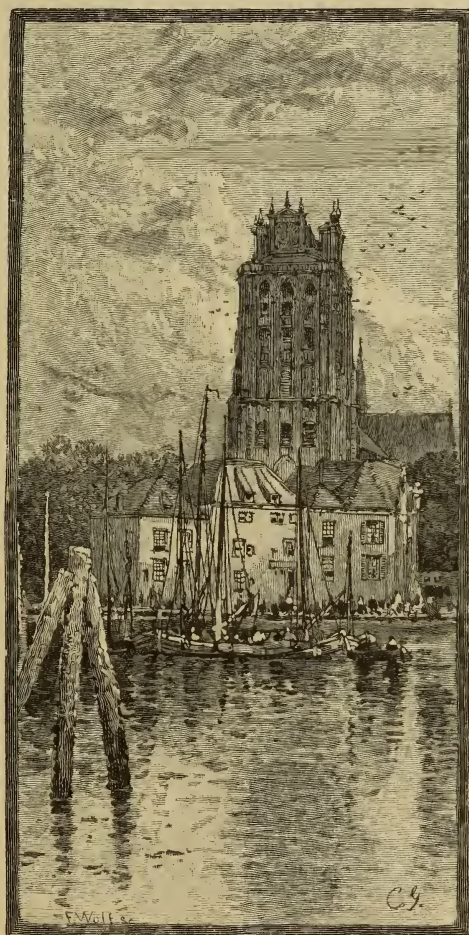
It was agreed that there was to be no sketching, merely a skirmish to see all we could, and then get back in time to catch the train, leaving the serious business of carefully doing it until another visit; that is to say, if we found Dort, on near inspection, turn out to be what it promised from afar. We had nearly three hours before us. Many a bigger place has been "done" for good and all in less time. For the first quarter of an hour we carefully noted the lay of the land and the various turnings, so as to find our way back again without being obliged to ask. But soon the interest began to thicken, the turnings were unnoted, and neither of us knew nor cared where we were, so long as we were going from one moving picture to another. We did not refer to Murray or Baedeker, uselessly bulging out our coat pockets; what we were simple enough to enjoy most of all, those excellent guides took no note of. The church tower was our guiding

star; and as we moved from foreground to foreground, so to speak, how splendidly it "composed" with the masses of quaint gables and high red roofs; then with tops of trees, golden with autumnal colors; then with tangle of shipping, bewilderingments of masts, brown sails, spars, ropes, and flapping pennons; now at the end of a long canal, with the multiform and multicolored backs of houses overhanging either side; now again at the end of a long street of elaborately gabled houses filled with picturesque bustle and life! Threading in and out the ever-moving kaleidoscope of form and color, as spots of high light, were the white caps of the women-folk, with their gold ornaments glinting in the sunlight—all this through ever-shifting veils of pale-blue peat smoke. And over and above all these varying, moving sketches wafted a strange tangle of queer and not often unpleasant odors—peat reek and the various tarry smells of the shipping, coffee being roasted or ground on the pavement in front of grocers' shops, all the spices of the Indies seeming now and then to get mixed with the inevitable escape of gassy smells from old gas-pipes being grubbed up, and having a battle royal for pre-eminence. Happily, the coffee, spices, and peat smoke in most instances appeared to have the best of it.

Dort seemed well off for rivers—three, not over silvery or limpid, and yet to a painter's eye not of an uninviting muddy tone, gray, green, or yellow, sometimes in separate tints, sometimes in mixtures, as they lay stagnant here or swirled swiftly there past the dikes, walls, and bridges of the old town, making not one island of it, but several. The breeze seems to have a fine chance for play round Dort; the brown and yellow sails scud by, and the windmills far and near seem cut loose or working for a wager.

By degrees, taking no note of time or direction in our wan-

derings, we came to the cathedral itself. Just a peep inside we agreed to, but it was far from easy to find the entrance. Every door that seemed the right one was not, and we were



DORT CATHEDRAL.

fain to ask our way in best pantomime. We were shown the koster's residence—a humble wooden excrescence jammed between the buttresses of the main building, with a pathetic little

green-painted door. We knocked, and a tidy, smiling dame, speaking never a word, but looking unutterably intelligent and willing, led us through her little De-Hooge-like kitchen, with its blue and white tiles, its pots and pans glistening, like burnished gold and silver, and something uncommonly nice bubbling in a gold-like saucepan on the fire. We looked so long and admiringly on this unexpected picture that the good woman must have thought us famished: it could not have been ready, that bubbling, fragrant stew, or I feel sure she would have offered us some there and then. There was a large, fluffy, comfortable cat curled up on a cushion on the easy-chair: evidently the church mice were not so poor, nor scarce, either. A large, open Bible with opulent silver clasps was on a small table, and near it a gray-and-blue mug filled with pale-yellow chrysanthemums. It was a wonder that we tore ourselves away from this simple little ditty in color to the "frozen music" of the cathedral interior beyond.

It was not a very cheerful strain of "frozen music" either, that particular interior, as we saw it. It might have been once. Alas! the demons of sacrilegious havoc, the flaming torch, the invaders' cannon-shot, the pick and crowbar, and even the simple, but efficient, half-brick through the stained-glass windows, had done much. The foolish restorer, with his mud-pie of stucco and his ghastly shroud of whitewash, had done more. The "tooth of time" had mumbled off choice bits of rare carving in wood and stone. But still, there it was:

"There was a something in its look
That murder could not kill."

If the pious Dutchmen of the good old days could only see the present state of their temple, reared with such reverence and toil to the Most High, I fancy that they would think the

boasted progress of this age rather crab-like in some matters of taste and refinement.

Out, somewhat sadly and rather chilled, into the bright air again. We found it time to get back to the railway, and began to think of some pantomime expressing that end and aim. But first let us try a little plain English on this man loading a truck with beer-barrels. "Railway station? I will *schouw* you the way." And he left his truck and took us down several streets until we struck the tram-line. He told the conductor our destination, made light of our thanks, and away we went, with infinite jingling of bells and tooting of horn, and snipping of tickets with a bell-punch as big and as dangerous-looking as an army revolver. It was a new tramway, and proudly they seemed to regard it. The conductor looked like an admiral of the fleet. At the station we found but one solitary small boy at the telegraph office. Everybody else, he explained, had gone to see the *fire*—and the train expected in a few minutes!

There was a fire somewhere near by, and, sure enough, down quite at the end of the long platform was the entire staff of the station, even the cook, in white cap and apron, gazing off into the dim distance—all except the small boy. We sought a restaurant opposite, and tried to get something from the solitary waiter who couldn't get away. He was evidently distracted between duty to us and impulse to rush off to the scene of conflagration. He brought us a *jam* sandwich for *ham*, which was a near shot for one in his state of agitation. We had a good opportunity while sitting by the window to see something of the Fire Department. The engine went by, but very deliberately and with much hesitation. We had even time to sketch it, as it rested for a time, while somebody went back for something. The station cook and

party came upon the scene by this time; and between his advice to go back, as it was all over, and the railway porter's advice to go on, as it was still smoking, if not burning, we got time to do a good bit. However, at last the prudent counsel of the porter seemed to prevail, and the machine finally meandered quietly off in the direction of the late fire, pushed and dragged by a very scratch company, and followed by the chattering crowd. Fires are not of frequent occurrence, evidently, in Dort, and they probably had not seen that archaic old "squirt" out for years. What wonder that they moved it gently, for fear of internal injury.



THE DORDRECHT FIRE DEPARTMENT.

The distant scream of the coming train warned us to the station, and we were soon on board again, well pleased with our three hours' experience. I think that one of us told the other the story of the Western man on a Mississippi steamer who got off at a "wood-up" station, where the boat would be detained an hour. He asked the captain if there would be time enough to see the town. The captain thought there would. The traveller returned in an hour with both eyes in mourning; his coat was torn up the back, and he had evidently been rolled in the mud.

“Have you enjoyed your walk?” asked the captain.

“Oh, very much indeed. There was a free fight going on up in the village, and I asked if they would count me in, and they did, and so I took a hand in; and then, after a time, I asked again, ‘Is this a *free* fight?’ and they said it was. So I said they might count me out, and I came away. For a small place, I found it most lively and amusing. I enjoyed it very much.”

The amusements of Dort are not, in the present age, of this nature. There may have been such opportunities during the troubled times of the wars of the Middle Ages.



CHAPTER II.

IN AND ABOUT HAARLEM.

OUR luggage was safe enough at Haarlem station, and we were soon comfortably housed at the Hotel Fünckler—landlord and all his people speaking English, and probably all the modern languages, if required. Haarlem seems prim and quiet, not to say sleepy, after Dort. It was too late to see the pictures that day, so we rambled about town, sketching bits of streets, canals, people—anything that came in our way. We were soon struck by the deep interest the Dutch people of every class seem to take in any one sketching. They will leave their dearest and most absorbing pursuits, business, home, friends, to come and look on. You will not have time to get a dozen lines in your book before you feel some one breathing almost in your ear. They are generally eating something, if they are women or girls, or smoking, if they are men or boys; but they are quiet and kind enough. There is no sort of use in looking severely at them, with a “What-do-you-want?” expression. They calmly eat or smoke, and look rather injured, or else return stare for stare with interest. Sometimes one would try the effect of turning over the leaf and beginning to write a few notes. It was seldom of any use; he would still find himself a centre of attraction. If he stand with his back to a wall, they will try to squeeze their heads round back of the book, or else they will plant themselves well in front of him, and stop by the hour together



A MORNING OBSERVATION IN HAARLEM.

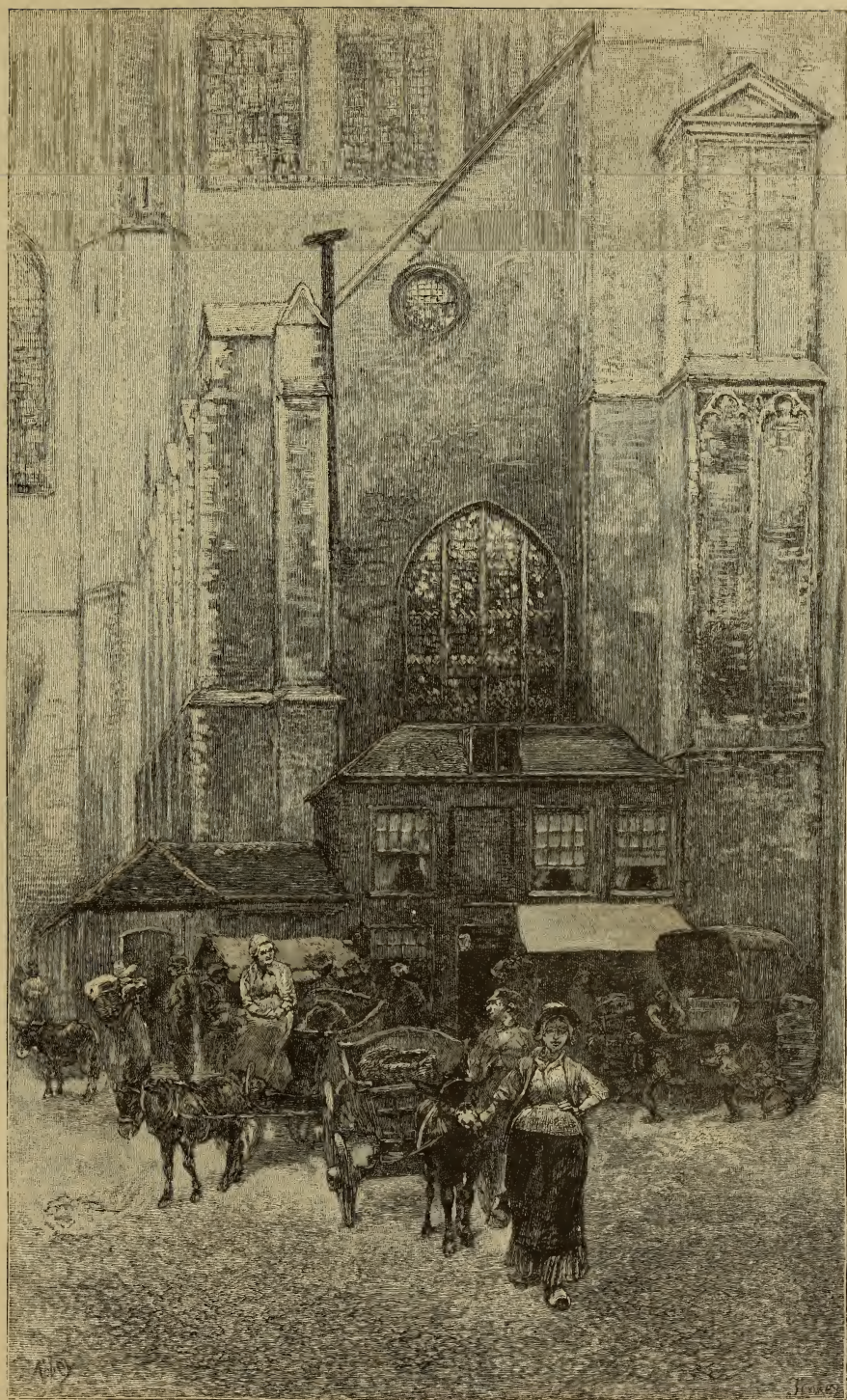
if he will. The only way is not to mind their profound and intimate scrutiny.

Haarlem is being modernized at a furious rate. Some of the old canals have been filled up and made into "boulevards." One was being filled up: we went out of our way to see if it were "sketchable." It certainly was not bad, with its inky, pent-up waters, the banks piled high with sea-sand, the men pitching it in with great wooden spades. But, oh! the perfume! Sulphuretted hydrogen was the most innocent element of the peculiar "bouquet." It was enough to stop a clock; and yet they didn't seem to mind it. Small boys were playing with little boats in it. Some men from a tobacco factory near by were wetting the leaves of the plant in this fragrant, aroma-giving element. I suppose that they had always been in the habit of using the canal for the same purpose, and it never occurred to them to stop because the water was getting a trifle richer in quality.

Around these new boulevards is springing up the modern Dutch villa—the pet production of speculative builders all the world over. Some were better, and some a little worse, than the one faintly hinted at in our few words about Dort. Although Holland abounds with the most delightful specimens of domestic architecture of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, they seldom care to revive it when they build a new house. There seems to be but one approved style now, and that the very worst style of French villa, with its dull, dark, "Mansard" roof. There is also an almost universal run on a certain garden statue in plaster, the most ill-modelled child, with a short tunic, holding a basket of chalk fruit on its simpering, idiotic head. No garden is complete without that, and, if the means of the owner permit, a large globe of shining, quicksilvered glass, in which are reflected the most awful distortions of every surrounding object. Those who are tired of

hearing of "high art" and "æsthetics," of harmonies and symphonies of color, of dadoes and old bric-à-brac, should come here to rest the troubled brain. If one could only stay a few months with the owner of one of these villas! The people are by no means backward in displaying their objects *de luxe*—mostly wax flowers or French vases. Gilt-edged books, bound in good, old-fashioned, positive colors, including now and then a cover in a tint of "magenta" that might have been distilled from long-pent-up and suffering canal water; these, massed in brass-bound book-slides, and waited on by a Muse or two in plaster of Paris, are on the veneered table between the parted curtains of every one of these new abodes. Wandering along one of the canals, we stopped to admire a crow-stepped, gabled house of time-toned velvety brick. We read on a tablet high up the name of Ph. Wouvermans. Yes, that must have been his studio window—that large one. A pleasant house, and a substantial, well-to-do air all about it. A pleasant spot, too, by the tree-shaded canal. Wonder if it is still a studio? It looks like it. It almost tempts one to ring the bell and ask if Heer Wouvermans is at home.

We passed out of the town through the one fine old postern-gate left standing, and wandered off a little way into the country to see how that looked. There were no shady lanes, nor stone walls nor fences to obstruct the view. The narrow, rush-fringed ditch runs around and through each little domain. It was, fortunately, during the potato gathering, and the groups of women and children at work in the fields were most picturesque. I am not particularly fond of the idea of women doing the hard field-work that they sometimes engage in; but potato digging, picking, sack-filling, and the rest of it are such very picturesque and easy-looking proceedings that one is tempted to look upon it as a feminine accomplishment or pas-



THE MARKET-PLACE, HAARLEM.



THE POTATO GATHERERS.

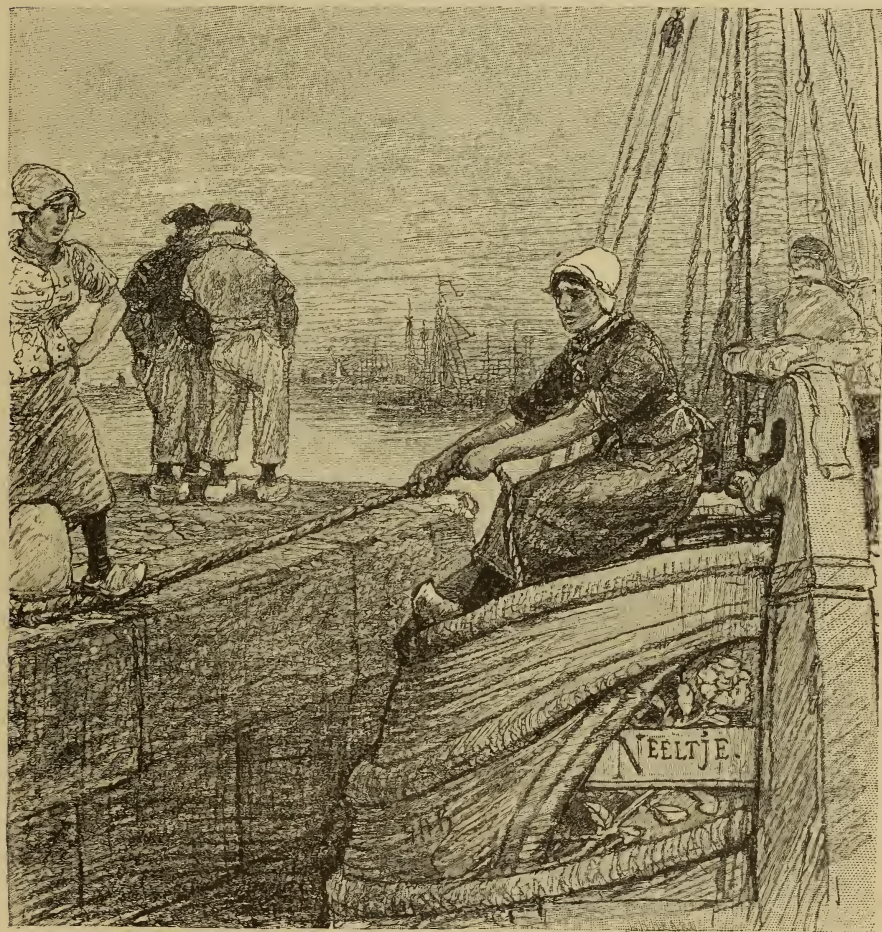
time, like hay-making. But the women do in Holland a number of masculine tasks, and very temptingly most of them "compose" for the sketcher's benefit. As solid, well-set-up specimens of healthy humanity the women have often the advantage over the men. It is a treat to see a powerful young Dutch-woman handle a rope on a pull-boat.

There are still in Haarlem a goodly number of charming old houses of the seventeenth century. Some of their gables lean rather forward towards the street, or sideways towards their next-door neighbor, in a way suggestive of fundamental debility. At first sight it seems safer to walk in the middle of the road, and look out for falling bricks. But one soon gets over the tottery character; in fact, some one told us that they were built originally at that angle forward. When they lean sideways people admit the mouldering pile beneath, and own to the sinkage.

The fine old city walls and ramparts that withstood the famous siege have been pulled down, all but one dignified gateway, a splendid specimen of its kind, and picturesque to the last degree. That is all that is left to illustrate one of the greatest chapters in the history of Haarlem. The boulevard and the tram-car have risen over the dust of all the rest. I should like to say something more worthy of this memorable siege, there is such a splendid opportunity; but, on second thought, perhaps it is as well to refer the reader to Motley, and not seek to supersede that admirable historian.

If any one should feel inclined to notice the lack of serious purpose in this writing, let me hasten to say that we scarcely had a serious moment there; we enjoyed it so much that we found no time to get serious. There is no use whatever in lamenting the sad fact that the Dutchman of to-day will, whenever he gets a chance, pull down remorselessly his most lovely old ramparts and town walls or halls, or, in fact, any relic of the past, to make way for a boulevard or a railway station. To tell the truth, we found the pickaxe and shovel being wielded on one or two old city gates in a way to make the antiquarian's heart bleed. The demon of improvement seems to be let loose at the present moment all over the land. Perhaps there may be some good, healthful purpose served, after all, now and again. Wiser heads must settle these matters; as I said before, let us take things as we find them.

The cathedral at Haarlem is not so fine in form or so picturesquely situated as that at Dort, but it seems better cared for and preserved. The restorer has not enjoyed himself over it from time to time. The great organ is its show-piece. It did not happen to play while we were visiting the church, and, as we did not happen to want it to play seriously enough to pay the fee for the far-famed special performance (the "Thunder-storm,"



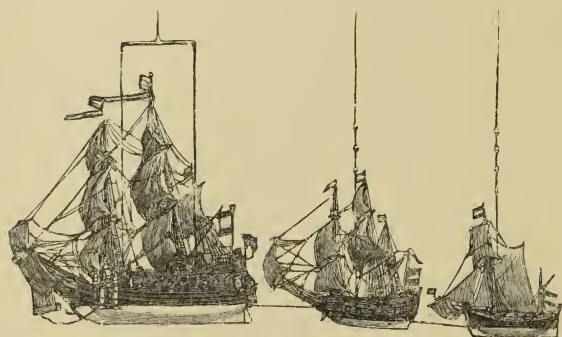
WOMEN OF THE PULL-BOATS.

which turns all the neighboring milk, and "God save the Queen," which is enough to loosen all one's teeth), we did not hear it on that occasion. I, for one, regret it now. Although I have, for the moment, spoken lightly of that tremendous instrument, I now feel that we missed something.

We saw the interior of the cathedral in the dim twilight, which most certainly lent enchantment to it. Votive offerings, in the shape of models of old Dutch galleons, with sails all set and pennons flying, hung from the ceiling here and there. These are the only votive offerings left to tell the tale—gold, silver, precious stones, changed rapidly into other spheres of usefulness during the long wars. It was no use melting down the toy ships, so they remain, and a rare comfort they are to the art student interested in the marine structures "of the period." There is rather a want of elegance about the interior, and, to speak kindly, there is rather a vain display in the matter of whitewash. And if one must now say farewell for the moment to the mighty organ, we are forced to admit that the style of its architecture is as far from being serious as it is from being joyous. It is rather frivolous, with its flowers like cabbages, and its elephantine Cupids. Nevertheless, I shall be delighted to see it again.

The museum, with its glorious magisterial works of Hals, not to mention other fine things, is well worthy even a special pilgrimage to any with a spark of art fire alight, or with even a good bit of art tinder in their souls on which a light may be kindled. A worthy description of the Hals masterpieces here is out of the question; it would only tantalize the poor art student who can't get at them at once, and make him miserable until he could. Such is not our motive. "Go as soon as you get the chance" is all there is to be said. And that many artists do go the names in the visitors' book testify. I saw the names of Millais, Frith, and Oules, the ink scarcely dry.

The sight of a collection like this is apt to make one serious, it seems such uphill work to it. That is, if you happen to wish to go in that particular direction, up that particular hill of Franz Hals. If your objective point be the towering Titian, Velasquez, or Rembrandt, you may feel inclined to make light of the Hals eminence; but, before you make *very* light of him, my dear young or old friend and fellow-student, try and do just a little bit worthy to go anywhere in the same gallery with him, and then that will somewhat help you on your way to Titian and Velasquez.



CHAPTER III.

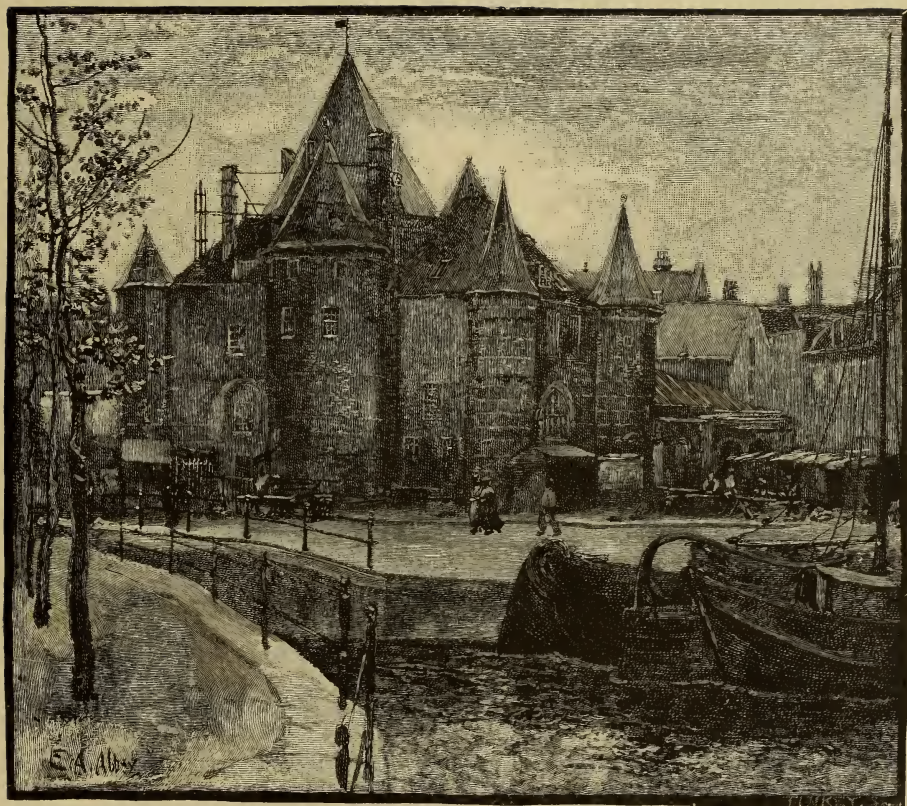
AMSTERDAM.

AND now, as we have lingered somewhat on the way—North Holland is still far off—let us push on to Amsterdam. We will mercifully spare you Rotterdam, although there is a very good gallery—in fact, the gallery itself is about the only decent one in all Holland, the little gallery at Haarlem excepted. The Hague and Amsterdam galleries are each a mere series of small rooms lighted by side windows, with reflections of opposite buildings on sunny days, and all sorts of havoc. The Rotterdam gallery principally lacks good pictures; there are some well worth seeing, but no masterpieces, as at the sister cities with the bad galleries. But poor Rotterdam lost her pictures by fire, and it is not so easy to get fresh masterpieces every day. The river Maas, by Rotterdam, filled with shipping of all nations, is most sketchable to a marine painter. The movement along the “Boompjes”—the “Rialto” of the place, “where merchants most do congregate”—is well worth seeing.

Amsterdam itself, as a town, may be very enterprising and commercially prosperous; it is, in fact, reeking with prosperity. Still, as a dream of architectural beauty, it is surpassed by one or two other and smaller places in the country. Perhaps even a very intelligent business-man would prefer the town-hall of Amsterdam to the town-hall of Middelburg, down in Zeeland, but no architect, painter, or sculptor would do so for a moment. And

as for those delightful old Dutch mansions of two or three hundred years ago, with their cunning masonry and brick-work, their elaborate figures, weathercocks, and flourishes, wrought by iron-workers when the blacksmiths and the masons were artists proud of their guilds, well, you will find these things, too, in the smaller towns in greater perfection. Middelburg, Veer, Hoorn, Delft, Dort, Leyden, Alkmaar, Utrecht, Nymegen, Maestricht—these are named at random; there are many towns even richer in fine old houses. But let us hope to come to them in due course.

The real pride of Amsterdam, after the evidences of her prosperity and her monuments of successful engineering, lies in her art galleries; perhaps it is safer to say, her pictures, her public and private collections, and her collections of antiquities and objects of art in the little tentative museum. The Hague and Utrecht, in respect of museums, are her only rivals. But, sad to relate, the Hague collection will, as soon as the museum now building at Amsterdam is finished, be merged into and mingled with the big sister's treasures. How the Hague people can ever see their collection taken from them without spilling their hearts' blood is more than I can understand. The present little museum of Amsterdam is in an old house—date sixteenth century, it seemed to be. Some of the rooms were furnished from floor to ceiling with genuine examples of Dutch furniture, all of that same period. Other rooms were of the half-century earlier and later, each complete in itself, and each a complete picture. Everything was arranged in its proper household position—pictures on hangings of Spanish leather or on backgrounds of Flemish tapestry; brass sconces, and ebony or tortoise-shell framed bevelled glass mirrors in between; brass candelabra hanging from the oaken rafters; all the chimney furniture, the andirons, tongs, shovels, and brushes, in place, and the garniture of brass and delf on mantel-shelves as it should be; oaken tables with carved



NEW MARKET, AMSTERDAM.

legs and feet, with old Persian rugs for table-covers; old vellum-bound books on shelves; oaken cabinets, with great tankards upon them, of various metals; great drinking-horns, on gold and silver stands, studded often with precious stones; mighty, deep-potion-holding goblets as well. What lusty fellows those old Dutchmen were, who tossed them off with toasts to their many victories by sea and land! A modern wine-glass beside one of these cups would seem puny and pitiable, only fit for a doll's house. No little mincing decanters, either, were they that kept the goblets company, but deep, wide-bodied flagons, such as figure in Van der Helst's pictures of civic and guild banquets, where the pourer of the wine holds the flagon to the top of his reach, and the cup low down, so that

“The bubbles that swim at the beaker's brim,
And break at the lip when meeting,”

are like little balloons. Then the mighty metal dishes and trenchers, big enough to hold the princely swan or the kingly peacock, or an ostrich, or whatever small game happened to be in fashion at the time. The powerful-limbed stools and chairs on which they sat were all in place. We were the only anachronisms in those perfect rooms; and, moreover, I don't think either of us was proud of the fact, if the truth must out. If a few of the old swash-bucklers of the time could walk in, clad in buff leather and steel corselet, with waving plume, long, fierce, up-brushed mustache, keen rapier on thigh, or, with hand on hilt, bent forward, and just cocking up the back hem of brodered cloak, great buckety boots of Cordovan leather, with jingling spurs of inch-long rowels at heel; or even a few gay gallants of the time, in satin or velvet jerkins, brave with bows of tagged ribbon, great bows of the same tagged ribbon where the garters fastened, cuffs and collars or ruffs of good old point, buff square-

toed shoes with heels worth mentioning, long hair cut square across the brow—what would they think of us as the improved product of two centuries? It is true that we were neither of us fascinating examples of elegance, prowling about their rooms in long ulsters, bulging with Baedeker and Murray; still, I don't fancy that they would care more for the chimney-pot hat, the curate collar, and the well-shot-forward wristband, the skin-tight cut-away coat, and the groom's trousers. However, needless to say (much to our regret, as we would have been charmed to see them), the aforesaid shades kept discreetly away.

These specially arranged and well-kept rooms were all very well and lovely; but some of the others in the house were given up to what Barnum would call "good square curiosities"—none of your newfangled art matters in such places as South Kensington, but the good old thing. There was the cast of the hand and foot of some dead-and-gone Dutch giant; the pistol with which some ordinary murderer slew some ordinary victim, long forgotten; pickled snakes and stuffed monkeys, moth-ravaged and dusty; and South Sea war-clubs enough to stock an arsenal. I think that this museum has the very club that slew poor Captain Cook. We saw this club in many Dutch museums, and I fancy that Amsterdam has it as well. Fortunately, these peculiar treasures are not overwhelmingly numerous, and are only temporarily retained until the coming of the Hague collection and the completion of the new building.

We had the good fortune to see the famous collection of pictures at the house of the Burgomaster Six. I don't know if the present Six be Burgomaster or not. I hope so, fervently. It would be a rank shame to call a Six anything else; worse, even, it would be an anachronism! I wonder, also, if the present Six resembles his glorious ancestor who was so happily inspired to collect Rembrandts? It is something to have a house where

the family portraits, painted by the great Dutch master, are still hanging—I believe in the self-same places where Rembrandt hung them. And such a portrait!—that of the Burgomaster. Never was anything more alive, more looking at you, than this; not gazing on you with that fixed, stony stare which is commonly supposed to be so marvellous if it “seem to follow you around the room.” The eyes of any staring daub will do that. These eyes seem to beam on you so kindly and calmly; and they are so refined, so intelligent, so haunting, in fact, that they do more than merely “follow you about the room.” They followed us home, and pleasantly haunted us for days. How we talked of that one picture! If we plodded about silently after that, thinking instead of talking, we generally found, on comparing notes, that we had been thinking of that one picture. True, it was only a man’s portrait; but, after all, it is one of the world’s wonders in the way of art. And for those who love simple, direct, unaffected work, and who fancy that no art can endure except the very high, and that a complicated muddle of contorted humanity is the most high, this will ever be a joy to look upon.

Before we leave the Rembrandt-haunted home of the Sixes, let us own that there is a charming little gallery under the same roof, and that there are some gem-like little Dutch works therein. But we walked about as in a dream. It is sad to own to it, but I, for one, forget completely all of the perfectly lovely collection but that one picture. I do remember dimly some rare blue-and-white china, choice enough to make a collector blue with envy and crackled with covetousness. It was to ordinary blue-and-white as clotted cream is unto sour skimmed milk. Happily, it did not sink very deeply into my desires, or affect my subsequent happiness. The portrait was my preserver, and I knew there was no use in coveting that.

There are other private galleries in Amsterdam, and we did our duty to them, and were well repaid, but we were careful not to rinse our palates with much small beer after the wine of that portrait. Who was it said,

“Never graceful, wise, or sainted—
That is how the Dutchmen painted”?

If this unkind indictment be true, it goes also to prove that they got on uncommonly well even without any of the above vital qualities. I frankly own that I can't remember any very graceful example of Dutch sacred or profane art, saint or goddess. I do remind me, however, of a certain “Susanna,” fearfully and wonderfully made, which must have been commissioned by some bygone “society for the discouragement of indiscreet elders,” and was doubtless a grievous success in its day and generation. I don't remember any glaring example of a Dutch “Venus,” by the way, except little snuffbox-lid affairs of a very mild form. The Dutch painters only took to the nude for the purpose of moral teaching. Eve (evidently filled with large apples), Potiphar's wife, and Susanna, St. Anthony and his undraped temptress—these mostly served the old painters when they wished to adventure into the regions of high art, and soar above common things.

And “sainted”? Perhaps it is fair to admit that the dear old Dutchmen did try the more elevated paths now and then. Did they not do their best to plant their share of arrows in the long-suffering St. Sebastian? The Prodigal Son, I admit, generally broke down, and the representations of the Prodigal revelling with improper companions were often too realistic to be fit for the thin, fine air of the upper levels of high art. The Virgin presenting the Infant with a small model of a Dutch wind-mill, and Abraham offering up Isaac with an early example of a

wheel-lock pistol, are a few well-known instances of how they tried. Perhaps this realistic treatment of sacred things was the better way of presenting the subjects to the people of their day. And, after all, they were, in these matters, much as greater painters were. Did not Paul Veronese, in his "Marriage at Cana," depict himself, relatives, and friends as assisting at the wedding feast?

There is an unmistakable atmosphere of art about Amsterdam; of Rembrandt, especially, you might say that he is pervading the air still, after all these years. It would be no easy matter for a stranger to visit Amsterdam and get away without being made aware of Rembrandt's great hold upon the people. If he were not shown his pictures, he would, no doubt, have his house pointed out to him; and, if not that, then the square or the statue would be his fate. I could not help thinking, when I saw the pretty surroundings of the Rembrandt statue in Amsterdam, that poor Ary Scheffer's statue at Dort would be glad to change places with him. The extremely sainted Ary seems sadly out of his element, and must feel low and commonplace, clad in badly fitting bronze frock-coat and trousers, standing bare-headed, with a wretchedly small palette on his thumb, in the middle of Dort market-place, surrounded by quacking ducks and geese, and plain, not to say coarse-speaking, market-women. Rembrandt would rather enjoy smiling down on the fat ducks. But poor, dear Scheffer! What a mercy for him that his nerves are of enduring bronze! We only stayed long enough in Amsterdam to "do" the collections at the rate of about three a day, and to make arrangements for cruising about the Zuider Zee, and seeing North Holland and Friesland.

There is not much to see in the way of costume in the large Dutch cities. Any part of London or Paris would show as great a variety. In fact, I should be inclined to back a London

"Blue-coat School" boy against anything in Holland, as not only being more downright picturesque, but also more historically correct and interesting to a student of costume. He means something. I do wish, however, that the Blue-coat boy himself could only know how well the real cap of the period would go with the rest of the dress, and wear it bravely. No, he would rather go bare-headed all his days, in the wildest weather, than stand the street gamin comparing his head-gear to a "muffin." His patron, Edward VI., wore one of the same shape. But what would the London street-boy say to the costume of the half-orphan schools of Amsterdam? Some sad humorist of philanthropic turn, in years gone by, thought it a neat idea to make the children of the school dress forever after in a party-colored dress of black and red. I have no doubt that he saw in it some fitting reminder of their half-orphaned condition if they were grotesquely pried up and down with these two striking contrasts.

The "Aan Spraaker" is, also, to the innocent stranger, more of an object of amusement than his grewsome and serious office would imply. He is a quick-moving individual, rushing from house to house, bearing tidings of deaths and births. He is clad in black cloth citizen's costume of the last century, cocked hat, white streamer behind, flying in the wind, if his message is of birth (some subtle sub-meaning also conveyed of sex as well, I fancy), a black streamer if of death. His knee-breeches, black stockings, and shoes with great silver buckles, make him rather a striking figure as he cuts along the streets on his momentous errands. He always struck me as having left something important behind him at home, and as hurrying back for it with all his might. As a picturesque object, or as an expression by means of outward show of his serious mission, he struck us as being somewhat of a failure.

Down about the docks, among the shipping, the Dutch sailor



FISHER-FOLK OF THE ZUIDER ZEE.



and his womenkind sometimes, if from the Zuider Zee ports or islands, are very good catches for one's note-book. You even see parties of them leading each other, generally by their interlocked little fingers, about town, looking into the shop windows of the Kalverstraat. They have not changed much in appearance, these sailor and fisher folk, during the last two hundred years. There are old Dutch pictures of these mariners, dressed then in the self-same baggy breeches, furry cap, and jerkin, rich with big silver buttons on the vest and around the waistband. We became rather impatient to get to the little islands and far-off ports, where we could see them at home and more at ease.

CHAPTER IV.

OFF TO ZAANDAM.

SOME of the small towns quite near Amsterdam are well worth visiting—Zaandam, Broek, Vollandam, Muiden, Zaandfoort-on-the-Sea, and several others—many of them within the radius of the tramway. One could easily stay in Amsterdam for a full week, and go every day to some outlying town or village worth seeing, especially to an architect or a painter. The ordinary sight-seer, “conducted personally,” may spare himself much weariness and disappointment, and pin his faith to Zaandam and Broek, and even there I doubt if he will get repayment for his trouble. To be really repaid by Holland one must be interested specially in something she possesses in her particular way, or in something done there peculiarly well—dairies, farming, stock-raising, windmill management, hydraulic engineering, commercial affairs, distilling, and a few other things of a realistic and substantial character. The quite-empty tourist is far better off in nearly any other civilized land, perhaps even better at home, for pure, solid enjoyment and cheapness. The strangeness would annoy him more than it would amuse or cheer, and the Dutch language would sadden for the rest of his days his memories of an otherwise kindly disposed people.

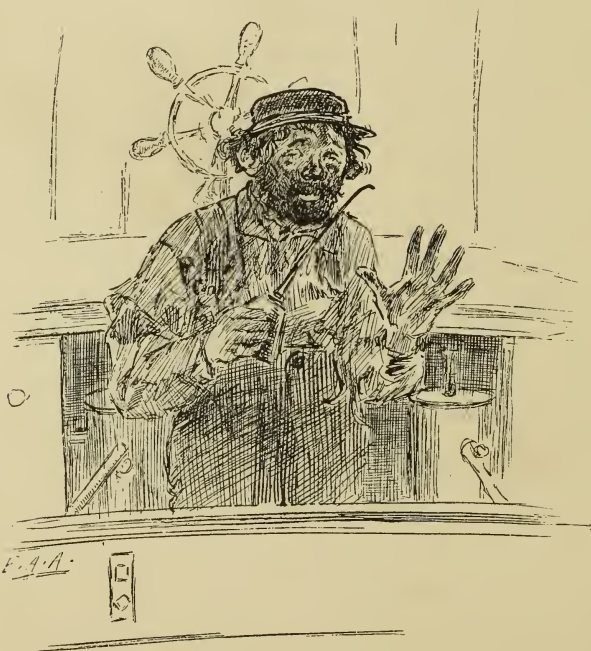
While discussing various ways and means of getting around among the North Holland towns and the islands of the Zuider Zee, we suddenly became aware of the existence of a small



ABOUT MUIDEN.

steam-launch, a *bateau mouche*, to be let for excursions, and starting from our very hotel grounds—or, rather, waters. We hailed it with delight. The wild idea of chartering the concern straight off, there and then, for a fortnight, before any one else should get the start of us, was seriously entertained for the first half-hour of our discovery. Then the more cautious project of taking it first for one day, on trial, interposed wisely and in good time. We therefore engaged the *mouche* to be ready for us bright and early next morning, steam up, and waiting to start. Breakfast was ordered for an early hour, luncheon to be got ready and put on board, so that we might be off betimes. It began to look like business now, and as we strolled up and down the little landing-place, quietly doing our cigars, and taking several good looks at our young steamer before we retired, we pleasantly thought of the morrow.

Alas ! the morning came, and with it a cold, steady drizzle, with just a wee point of smudgy sun trying to peep through now and again. The little craft was moored just under the windows of our bedroom, and we noted the first stir of her crew getting her ready for the day. Their anxiety to be off and away, however, was not equal to ours, evidently. Not a soul in sight or a whiff of steam visible. And how hang-dog and discouraged she looked, too, in the morning drizzle ! Down to breakfast. From our window we could still see the *mouche*, not getting ready in the least. It was becoming rather depressing. "Never mind ; cheer up !" We were assured, however, by our polyglot waiter that the *mouche* could get up steam in ten minutes or so—encouraged by a little petroleum, I fancied. Finally the long-looked-for engineer hove in sight, with a small fagot of kindling wood under his arm and a large can of oil in his hand,



taking his time, naturally. After a general survey of sky, wind, and water, and an evident wrestle with some internal misgiving, he set to work to get up steam. He never exactly "went below" to do it—that is, all of him at once into the furnace-place—for when his head and white jacket would disappear his legs and feet could be seen waving aloft, as it were showing that, whatever might be the peril, he was still there. After much scraping and scratching of matches we saw a curl of smoke from the funnel. Soon the burly form of the pilot, skipper, or whatever he was who took command, came upon the scene, with his dinner in a bowl, tied over with a handkerchief. By this time the engineer had got himself into a fine state of grime and grit that no amount of rubbing seemed to improve except in the way of polish. He was rapidly getting to look like an old bronze with a most valuable "patine" on the surface.

The drizzle was clearing, and the sun getting more evident, as they hoisted a small British flag, and off we went, with no end of shriek of steam, splutter of screw, and stirring up of mud generally. We wanted the "Star-spangled" as well, but they hadn't it at the moment, so the rest of the bunting was Dutch. There were many faces at the windows of the hotel, guests and waiters: the latter gentry seemed to smile a little more openly and radiantly than we thought the occasion warranted at the time. Before we returned, however, that evening, we began to suspect the cause of their smiles as we left in the morning. They must have seen that crafty little tea-kettle of a steamer go merrily off at morn and sadly return at eve on some few other occasions. We got on very well indeed through the canals, miles of them, some not quite so much like main sewers as others, till finally the last lock was passed, and we were out on the broad swash of the Y. What a relief! And yet the Y is far from being the most limpid bit of water; still, it was the

open, and we breathed more freely. Now where? The Zuider Zee was too rough, impossible. The skipper waved his arm up and down, expressive of heavy billows, and executed a fearful pantomime of all hands being deadly sick in consequence—far too realistic in its rendering to be pleasant. “Zaandam; Peter the Great’s workshop; miles of windmills!”—arms vigorously rotated to express the lively state of this industry. “Zaandam be it, then!” Off we spluttered again at the rate of three or four miles an hour for about half an hour, and then we slackened speed. Something wrong with the machinery. The engineer got a broom splint and probed about in an oil receptacle. Broom splint broke off short in the hole. Stopped altogether. Fire raked down. Dismal consultation. Derision of wretches on passing boats, who offered ironically to tow us along. The peculiar force of strange chaff somehow lost on us.

Thank goodness! Machinery finally tinkered up, and off we went again. Must go at quarter speed, however, or will not be able to make Zaandam at all. Once there new thing, whatever it was, could be put on or in. In the meantime, every craft that floated, even doddering old hay barges loaded to the water, went on gayly past us. We were given to understand by the engineer that there was no danger of any explosion. With the fires nearly raked out, and the feeble little tea-kettle of a boiler only simmering, the possibility of an explosion never occurred to our minds. We might be run down by a hay barge, or cast away on a bleak strip of sand, in which case we could console ourselves with the gorgeous luncheon from the hotel—some two bottles of claret each, a couple of pallid, clammy fowls, and a large tin vat full of soul-chilling salad—a lovely enough lunch on a sweltering day, under the waving trees; but this day had gone back to its half-frozen drizzle by this time, and there were

no trees to wave. We tried the luncheon, however, sadly, and as a matter of form, but that wretched little boiler sent unsavory whiffs of faint greasy steam wafting by as an accompaniment to every nibble of food. "Are we getting a realizing sense of the joys of this day? Are we saturating ourselves fully with its too-fleeting delights?" These were questions that we now and again propounded to each other as the sour east wind shaved round our necks freely in spite of turned-up collars and thick ulsters. It was a time to tell a Christmas story each, but we never thought of it.

The grimy engineer entertained us with an account of some American ladies who, from that same *mouche*, took photographs of many of the leading windmills that line the banks of the main watery thoroughfare of Zaandam. His pantomimic rendering of the various processes of taking these views was a thing to see. We were obliged to snub him, gently but firmly, however, for we found that he was constantly at a loss for one or two of the ten words of English that he knew, and was obliged to explain by dumb-show, and as much of this was prodded into one by means of his grimy forefinger on some part of his hearer's clothing, it got to be the sort of button-holing that left too lasting a memory.

All journeys must end, however, and our gentle craft finally panted and gurgled its way up to the town, and I really thought that the gasp she seemed to give as she sidled up to the dock was about her last—for that spell, at least. We were very low down in the water as we ran alongside, so that our first impressions of the people of the place began at a goodly row of legs, sabots, and hems of trousers and skirts, all sorts and sizes, mostly large and lusty. The problem of how to scale the steep side of the dock was soon solved by a large brown hand being reached kindly down and grasped in both of ours. First one

of us went up, and then the other, with a free and lightsome pull that gave us a modest opinion of our specific gravity.

“Will you go see shop Peter the Great?”

We seemed to run into the arms of a Committee of Reception. Of course we would go; the very thing we came for. Leaving our *mouche* to repair herself, we started off with our big-handed friend to the shrine of Zaandam.

Down little devious streets, very prim and well-kept, mostly paved with little red bricks set on edge (clinkers), over little bridges spanning tiny streams or “runnels”—though the water does not run in the slightest degree, but sleeps peacefully (except in the matter of peculiar “bouquet”) beneath its mantle of



IN ZAANDAM.

bright green duck-weed. We were evidently going by a short-cut, as our guide led us through various back yards and kitchen-gardens and private grounds in a most confident and reckless way. We somewhat startled the occupants of the damp little summer-houses as our long pilot swept past with his strange craft rigged out in fearsome ulsters. There were many little pictures of a domestic nature that we were almost tempted to stay and admire, but the suddenness of our coming seemed to bring into each happy circle a certain shade of restraint, not to say dismay; we therefore passed on like a fleeting vision to the imperial shipwright's hut.

Here let us warn any devoted admirers of the great Peter not to waste any of their pent-up emotion on the structure that first greets their view. The original hut is safely encased in an outer shell or husk of a building, in order to preserve it from the nibblings of Time's too-eager tooth, and the even more merciless hacking of the name-carving and scribbling wretch of every clime and degree. There is a narrow space between the outer and inner hut which gives room enough to walk around the latter. The hut windows are so scratched with names and inscriptions that there is no looking in or out. What a vast proportion of Peter's visitors wore diamond rings! and desperate late-comers have either deeply and wildly ploughed their "Snooks" or "Smith" over and through the more modest surface scratchings of the original inscribers on the panes, or else they have revenged themselves on the windows and walls of the outer husk. The first hut was fast tottering to its fall through age and infirmity, years ago, when some of Peter's pious posterity, suddenly remembering him, came on a pilgrimage to Zaandam, and saved the relic from further destruction and desecration by putting up the preserving outer casing. The poor old workshop, even crutched up and patched and

tableted and dusted as it is, is about the most infirm and discouraged-looking habitation, even for a relic, that one could well see. It seems all the more lop-sided and shaky by its contrast with the bolt-uprightness of its outer shell; but inside and out all is spick and span, neat and painfully clean; the wood-worm and the mouse are banished, and mould and canker are warned off the premises. The inner floors are very up and down, and the walls sadly out of perpendicular. The fireplace is in the best condition of all; over it is a marble tablet setting forth in a fine flowing Latin inscription the virtues of Peter, "the pomp and circumstance" of the hut's restoration, and the names of all concerned who were worth mentioning.

Some old furniture "of the period"—chairs, tables, cupboards, and stools—were in place about the rooms. Whether any of these identical articles were there in the time of Peter is a question for his friends and admirers. Faith is largely required. They look as if they *might* have been, and that should be enough to rout the carper. I need not say that there is a small sum to pay—a sort of "Peter's-pence," if you like—and that you may invest largely in photographs, write your name in a book, and all the rest of it, as if you had been over a palace. We did all these things, as there is no use in being unpleasant about principles on an occasion of this kind. We left the hut of Peter sadly and silently, each waiting for the other to offer something in the way of interesting reminiscences of Peter; each kept modestly silent, fearing the superior information of the other. It must be remembered that we did not at early dawn entertain the slightest notion of going anywhere near the hut of Peter on this particular occasion. We would have scorned to offer the information in our Baedeker and Murray to each other—we should have found each other out directly; besides, it is a very long story, and to tell it properly one must



ZAANDAM INDUSTRIES.

consider nearly the whole history of the Russian Empire, so much does one thing lead to another. This was not our purpose at the moment. Therefore we plodded on silently and sadly for a short time through the humid byways of the town. Our guide did not seem as if he cared to say farewell to us either. There were still the windmills; there was still the rest of the town to see; there was still plenty of time. Zaandam is rather an important place. Many ships and boats are built there, many windmills thresh the air with their white arms, and

grind every sort of thing that can be ground, and when they don't do that, they saw wood and pump water. The inhabitants are fearfully rich; at every jaunty villa we came to, our guide stopped to impress upon us some notion of its owner's wealth. "*All* these rich people are windmillers." He could speak tolerable English, so we were spared the wild pantomime which, when expressive of four hundred windmills, takes some considerable room in a village street. We were ferried over the watery avenue which seems to be really the main thoroughfare of the town. There were the mills, sure enough, miles of them—some four, I think—on each side of the way, as far into the dim distance as the eye could reach. It looked like a lesson in perspective to try for the exact vanishing-point.

We returned to our steamer, which in the meantime had tinkered up the loose screw, and the jocular engineer portrayed with some vigor the rate of speed we should be driven at under the new order of things. We were soon spinning away right merrily up the waterway aforesaid.

If any one desires to see Holland from its windmilly side, let that person by all means come to Zaandam, and be surfeited forever after. The whole united industry seemed to be thriving and flourishing, too; and when a windmilly town does flourish, it is (from a flourishy point of view) a thing to remember. It seems to lack reposefulness, if one cares for it, but for one of an active temperament it is highly stimulating. It is not the place for a moony or absent-minded person, as there is always a chance of being brained by the merry wind-sail, unless one is somewhat alert. There seems to be an unfathomable variety of individual taste in the matter of adorning and decorating some of these mills. They were nearly all as bright as paint or wash of every known hue could make them. None of the æsthetic, faded-leaf tones here either, but good, riotous roaring reds, greens, and



A FAIR DAUGHTER OF HOLLAND.



blues, that seemed to sit at once on any mild talk of "broken tints" or "melting combinations." Somehow, they seemed to get the right tone under that delicious gray-blue haze that hangs so often over the landscape in Holland. Many mills had their little flower-garden running down to the river's edge, and the little summer-house overhanging the water, with its inevitable little motto expressive of the owner's sweet content, like "Lust in Rust," which at first sight looks like bad and improper English. It only means "rustic felicity." Here sit Van Dunk and his friends in the shades of evening, smoking their pipes, sipping their beverages, and listening to the frogs.

We were steaming along splendidly now, sending up a fine wash and swash along the banks, dancing the hitherto placid little fishermen about in their punts, and sending small billows slopping up into the little "Lusty-Rusty" summer-houses overhanging the river. I somehow fancy that the same fussy little *mouche* was not over-popular along the Zaandam waters. There is a curious and special quality about the Dutch language that seems to fit it for profane and deadly invective: it was really a comfort not to understand much of it, as the rasping rattle of a Gatling-gun-like fire of compliments passed between our demoniacal engineer and the bespattered revellers in some swamped summer-house. Whatever might have been the beverage they were taking, it was evidently not contained in bottles that were handy for throwing, like a ginger-beer bottle, for instance, or I feel sure that we would have had a shower of them as well as of the imprecations. One expletive hurled at our grimy engineer that seemed to almost make him foam at the mouth was that he was a (something) "*Koekbacker*." It sounded awful enough when they leaned heavily on the first syllable; but on subsequent inquiry I found that they had only called him a sort of pastry-cook. It was a wonder he did not explode, boiler and all.

On, on, and still on—and still windmills—until really the thing began to pall, as did the partridges on the French king. We almost wished ourselves back to the house of Peter. The return trip was not nearly so lively. The fearful taunt of “*Koek-backer*” had turned the gall of our grimy one; he seemed to have withered under the sting. He rubbed his inflamed eye with an oily wad of unclean cotton waste, and seemed to meditate vengeance; and I think that the speed was not nearly so rampant as on the up journey. It was getting toward evening as we passed through into the Y again, and I fear me that the grimy one had rather overdone the hilarious spin up the waterway, for soon the new screw appeared to regret its career of usefulness, and to give signs of breaking down again. The situation was not one of sufficient peril, nor were the delights of it of such a nature, as to make it worthy of record. I know that we more than once regretted that we did not try the train back to Amsterdam, just for a change. It had turned bitterly cold, and the drizzle had set in again. There were fine effects in the sky and Y of a wild, bleak, weird nature; but the poor little steamer, gasping painfully along with us, coughing its very heart out with its declining powers, was too much an alternate object of pity and execration to allow us to give a mind still vexed with lingering visions of the intermixed arms of many insane windmills to the contemplation of dreary though effective bits of scenery. This, with a wolfish hunger, was not enlivening in the least. So we will draw a veil of silence over the last stretch of the return along the Y. The *mouche* gave her last gasp within a stone’s-throw of her dock, and the final sidle up to the landing was a very inglorious effort of poling, shoving, splashing, and profanity. If we had felt like singing just then, it would have been selections from “Never again with *you*,” but we did not feel like singing—except exceeding small.

All was over with the bright vision of our fortnight's trip on our little launch all by ourselves. There were many apologies and regrets offered to soothe us when we roundly denounced the behavior of the steamer to her owner. She had *never* done this before. Of course. However, after a good supper, and another look at the little humbug through the curling smoke of a pacifying cigar, it was not a bad day, all told. Mark Tapley would have positively enjoyed it all. And as we sat by the sunny window at breakfast next morning, looking at the little *mouche* having her screw tinkered up again, and a fresh poster setting forth her virtues in several languages being affixed near by, we had no very bitter word for her.

Just then there came to us a smiling and confidential little man, who observed that if he had only been with us the day before, we would not have wasted our time as we did. As we had never been aware of his presence until that moment, we could not well have invited him to go on the previous day. We must have looked somewhat puzzled, so he informed us that he was a guide, and knew all the ways, not only of this place, but of the world in general. He was an abnormally bright and alert young man, a shade too knowing, if anything. We listened cautiously to the tempter. We were getting tired of pantomime: it took too much time, and attracted too much attention. The clever youth, however, was not free to go with us himself, but he could highly recommend a friend, who knew the country "like unto his own glove," etc., and very soon after the friend appeared upon the scene. The contrast was so sudden and striking between the two men that we felt a momentary resentment toward the new-comer at once—a stoutish middle-aged man, a Sancho Panza and Wouter van Twiller combined, and suddenly aroused to action. He spoke very fairly several languages, but, best of all, he had been all over Holland; the islands of the Zuider Zee

and the various places in the north and Friesland were familiar things to him. He grew upon us rapidly. There was something about him that not only looked honest and capable, but also seemed to promise that time would not hang heavily on our hands; and he created the suspicion that there was a good fund of amusement in him. The bargain was soon arranged, and Jacob was to enter upon his duties then and there. He began by modestly advising a little plan of his own that would take in all the leading dockyards, arsenals, prisons, lunatic asylums, gin distilleries, dikes, and "polders" in the Low Countries, not to mention the Zaandam windmills all over again. Jacob's face was a capital study of dismay as we ruthlessly swept away all this pretty programme of his by telling him that we wished to carefully avoid all and sundry these deeply interesting objects.

"First of all, Jacob, we want to go to the island of Marken, in the Zuider Zee. Can you take us there?"

"Of course I can take you dere, but, good Gott, gentlemens, dere is nothing at all dere—nothing but sand, and fisher houses, and fisher people. Dere is no hotel, no shops, no place to get anything to eat, no doctor even. Dere is in fact only the mid-wife, what you call—"

"That's the very sort of thing we are looking for, Jacob." We did not mean the useful lady he referred to, but he seemed to take us literally, judging from his expression.

"Well, gentlemens, if you must go dere, you will have to go in one of the fishing-boats from Monnickendam. Dere is no other way. I must send a telegram to Monnickendam at once to get the fishing-boat ready. I must get you a carriage to drive to the dam, and wait dere until we return from Marken, and then drive back to Amsterdam in time for the table d'hôte."

"Bother the table d'hôte!"

This was another sad blow to Jacob, whose own plans and ours he evidently arranged on the basis of being able to get home always in time for that stately ceremony. We soon scattered that plan. It was a shock, but he bore up.

"When do you wish to go?"

"At once."



CHAPTER V.

MARKEN AND MONNICKENDAM.

IN a scant quarter of an hour after we first encountered Jacob he was in full occupation, telegraphing, carriage-hiring, getting our traps ready, and all the rest of it. The sketching-gear was a sore bewilderment to Jacob, as we rumbled away in a sort of mourning-coach drawn by a pair of long-tailed, curved-backed, Roman-nosed, jet-black steeds, all complete, toward the ferry. Our newly found guide, philosopher, and friend must have thought it odd that we would look at the brown-sailed, broad-beamed old luggers and hay barges scudding by, and would not take even the most tepid interest in the new dry-dock or the petroleum storehouses, or listen to the highly interesting statistics concerning them. He soon left us to our chatter about "flying shadows," "glints of sunlight," "play of color," and all the rest, his face meanwhile becoming a splendid study of sad perplexity as he tried to follow the strange terms of artistic *patois*.

The Y is rather broad, and the ferrying over is quite a nice little voyage.

We were to drive past Broek, a well-known show place. The Dutch themselves smile very broadly at the curiously exaggerated notoriety of this one quaint, clean little village over all others in the country. Years ago, it seems, some great authority happened upon Broek. Perhaps he had not ventured far afield in Holland, and was much struck by its rather obtrusive



A SKETCH AT MARKEN.

show of tidiness, and he at once proclaimed that it was the cleanest place in the world, and worth going miles to see. He had ventured into one of the cottages, and, falling in love with some rare bit of old blue-and-white china, had bought it for the usual "song," which fact he also recounted. Ever since his time adventurous followers have gone to Broek, and have been astonished at its elaborate display of scrubbing and polish-



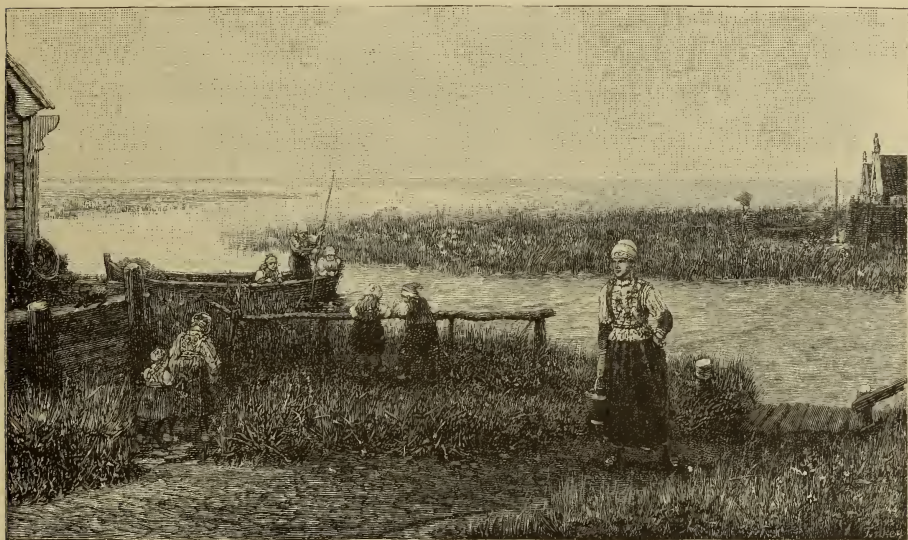
ON THE WAY TO MONNICKENDAM—DISTANT VIEW OF BROEK.

ing. They have likewise bought old china, although the "song" got into a higher key as time went on. The dear old lady has been obliged to restock her cottage over and over again with her dear grandparents' teapots and punchbowls. She has made her little fortune, and every day blesses her discoverer. The present dear old lady is probably not the original dear, but a grandchild. She is no great fraud, however, being

fearfully and wonderfully neat, and the china is scarcely dearer than one may now and then find it in London or New York. The mourning-coach was left outside the village. I do not know what would have happened to us if we had trundled that impressive but dusty old rattletrap over the immaculate brick pavements of Broek. The few people about who looked at us at all looked first at our shoes to see if we had brought any contamination thereon. The place seemed gone to sleep, but not in a healthy way. It had indulged in a most thorough scrub, and then taken a dose of some strong narcotic. There were few signs of business or occupation. The inhabitants are mostly retired traders from the neighboring cities who have come here to take their "Lust in Rust." There are several billiard-rooms. The most retired of merchants must do something to kill time ere it finally kills them. Broek is well worth stopping to see, if one happens to be passing by, but it is scarcely worth going on purpose to see. Many and many a Dutch village we saw quite as spruce and clean. However, Broek has a certain prestige, and if the traveller should return without seeing it, he will be safe to meet with scores of friends who will tell him that he missed the one place of all others that he should have gone to: "that clean little town where one picks up bargains in china—Broek, Brook, Breck, or whatever it's called." Perhaps, after all, the traveller had better, for his peace of mind, go, and have done with it. The subject of luncheon was mooted to Jacob; he stared as the warder of Windsor Castle might if one should propose refreshments on the premises. Outside the radius swept by the untiring mops of Broek was the little inn at which we left our ebon steeds. To this we went, and a very highly polished, cosey, sleepy little inn it was. The only refreshment we could get, however, for love or money, was bread and Dutch cheese. The bread was a small loaf, in size, shape, and texture

like a very pappy bun; this, cut in half, and a wafer of the cheese put in as in a sandwich, was our refreshment. Let those who carry epicurean notions about with them take heed when they go to out-of-the-way Broek. The Roman-nosed chargers were again put in motion, and soon rattled us over the rest of the way toward Monnickendam.

We were much impressed that day by the lovely quality of



A BIT OF MARKEN.

the gray-blue sapphire sky, the exquisite tenderness of its soft azure fields, pasturing innumerable flocks of fleecy cloudlets, and stretching far, far into the melting distance, distant villages and streams, sails, windmills, and the yellow-gray stretch of the Zuider Zee beyond, all blending into the delicious tints of the shimmering blue-gray horizon. No wonder that the old Dutch landscape-painters gave such good measure of sky to their pictures: the thin, narrow strip of ground showing distance, middle distance, foreground, and all being often not more than a fourth

of the composition, and even less sometimes, but the skill and love given to the blue vault above more than recompensed the absence of the earth beneath it. Jacob must have thought us demented, both of us, with our noses lifted heavenward, raving about the sky. It was high time to get us back to earth, and prove that he was a guide willing and even determined to earn his title. "Gentlemens! pardon me, but I don't think it right to let you go past dose ting we just coming to. Now you see dose ruin?" "The heap of bricks?—well?" "Well, dose ruin was a Roman Catholic Church. She was burn down some two year ago." "Well?" "Well, dey don't tink she pild him up again; she don't got enough money—de congregation." "Well, go on; was anybody killed?" "Oh, no; nobody was hurt. And now, gentlemens, I will schouw you where dey store de petroleum." And he did. We didn't like to wound his feelings by a languid interest in these things that he had set his heart on revealing to us; but this kind of practical information would have to be mildly discouraged before long. We were passing the New Doelan Inn, and Jacob explained that Doelan meant a target, and that the target was the device of the various companies of archers in olden time. That was very pretty, We knew it all before, but still it was well to encourage Jacob in any information that led him into the paths of the picturesque. Besides, we soon discovered that his statistics were very loose, his dates conflicting, and his matters of history foggy. Dear old boy! "honest as the skin between his brows," faithful and useful to the last degree. At the same time, although one would never think of putting down all his store of knowledge as gospel, it was amazing to note the number of useful things he did know. The long spire of Monnickendam was just in sight when an outward-bound traveller from the place, accosting Jacob, informed him that our boat was all ready

and waiting for us. "Now just see how every little thing gets known at once in that sleepy old town! The telegrams did it. Every man, woman, and child in the place has heard by this time that the boat is chartered to take some strangers to Marken."

Monnickendam, as we rattled over its grassy pavements, seemed worthy of a far more extended notice, from the sketcher's point of view, than we could then give to it. Rapidly as we drove through the town down to its shrunken and pathetic little harbor, we saw enough to make us wish to come again. There was a grand old brick church, big enough to hold every creature in the town four times told. It has its history, too, well worth the telling, perhaps not by the present writer, as he has only just read a few thrilling fragments, and has scarcely had time to assimilate them properly; besides, our boat is waiting for us. The unemployed part of the inhabitants (about half the entire population) were there to see us embark. There was only a very tepid interest in us, after all, and nothing whatever that might be called enthusiasm. The sketching paraphernalia disconcerted them, evidently. The charm of its unexpectedness did not entirely appeal to them. The vessel was bright and gay; its brass-mounted rudder shone again; but she looked so solid—in fact, so *stolid*—that it seemed as if it might take a lot of persuasion and fair wind to move her. It was a study to see her Dutch crew manage her. She just seemed to meander out of the harbor as if she were going for a morning walk; no straining, or pushing, or profanity on any one's part. In six minutes after we touched the deck we were out on the gray-billowed Zuider Zee. It beat our wheezing little steam-launch out and away for good sense. It would be an hour's run, perhaps two, according to the wind, to Marken; but little did we care. Stretched out on the polished deck, we

sketched the receding line of land, and then the coming outline of distant Marken. We sketched the captain and mate, to their deep amusement, and the minutes flew by all too fast. We turned an almost rudely deaf ear to Jacob's information about the scheme for draining the Zuider Zee some time. We merely said that we hoped it might be too big a job for them, and refuse to stay outside. Fancy it!—one big dish of a drained-out polder, and quaint Marken and Urk no longer islands, but inland villages! The painters of the future may well mourn if they do it. To think that we were sailing free, in a good-sized vessel, over what one day would be fields of waving grain or pasture for flocks and herds! To tell the strict truth, however, I don't think that this or anything like it was thought at the time: it must have been thought out since: the pencils were far too busy. What a difference, too, between our bronzed fishermen of to-day, with their baggy breeches splashed with silver buttons, some of them as big as small saucers, and our grimy, oily engineer of the day before!

The vessel was a very A1 of its kind, as spruce and polished as a show man-of-war. Any lady of the land might have gone down into her spotless little cabin (a medium-sized lady), and felt herself at home; that is, if she did not stand up too suddenly, and bring her fashionably bedight head-gear in contact with the under side of the deck. "This is not a regular fishing-smack, Jacob?" Jacob inquired of the bronzed young captain, who told him, with no small degree of pride, that at the present moment it was not his calling to fish, and that the vessel was what was called in England a yacht. We did not even offer to smile, although we thought of the author of "White Wings," and of the other happy author of "Pinafore," and wondered if he would call her a sister of his *Chloris*. We mildly suggested

"Tjalk" to the skipper, but he stuck to Yacht. Well, whichever it was, she danced merrily over the waves. She did not plough through, but slid over the surface like a light-hearted duck. Marken, from the sea, was like a short bit of the dotted line of sand and the ribbon of green verdure that stand for a "distant view" of nearly any part of Holland. We soon came to the narrow entrance of the snug little haven, and, dropping sail as we glided through, went bounding up to the dock without an ounce of impetus to spare.

"Why did you, O Jacob, try to set us against coming here, by tales of hard lines in fishing-smacks, and all the rest of it?"

"Well, gentlemens, if you like it, it is not for me to say."

"Like it! Why, this is the sort of thing we want every day."

"Well, if you want funny-looking people and funny houses, you will see them here, and no mistake;" and he led the way to the village.

Prepared as we were for a few surprises, I must own that we were taken somewhat aback by the startling combinations of form and color met with at every step in this queer little island. It was an understood thing that we were not to look astonished or surprised, and, above all things, not amused, by anything we might see. Fancy trying to preserve an expression of mere respectful interest, surrounded by the full company of some mad comic opera (costumes, scenery, and all), disporting themselves in broad daylight! Artistic human nature will stand much, but one would have to be very mouldy with the most woe-begone principles of a false kind of "High Art" to keep down one's feelings in a moment like this. The people themselves—mostly women and children, the men being away fishing—struck us as being very fine creatures. There was a sturdy, independent, and rather a defiant air—not in any way aggressive, however—about them. They have a steady way of return-

ing your gaze with a strong, blue-eyed stare that makes it rather embarrassing to stop and pull out a sketch-book and begin with-out a word of compliment or explanation.

Luckily we were quite understood, and even encouraged, when the sketch-books were brought out. Artists had often been there before. In fact, few but artists ever do go. They must fancy the outside world to be for the most part composed of artists, and they must have found them tolerably harmless, well-intentioned folk, so long as their pencils ran on as they wished. Besides, Jacob soon explained our peaceful mission, and also that we were natives of Brazil. He afterwards explained to us that for some reason or other the Brazilians are rather popular with the islanders. They don't care for English, they hate the French and the Germans, and they would gladly scald a Spaniard. They have not yet had time to forget the past.

It is never a good plan in sketching these people to ask them to pose for you: restraint and awkwardness are the frequent results. Begin sketching "at large," anything for a bit of background. They very soon meander into your line of vision, especially the nice-looking ones, and manage to keep tolerably quiet, too, in their own way. If they do not, a kindly hint will bring it about. We began a slight sketch of the well, and in a few minutes the number of girls who all at once required water was astonishing. As soon as we saw any very good ones, Jacob artfully engaged them in conversation, and they were in no way loath to converse, these Rebekahs. One superb creature in full costume, complete to immense silver shoe-buckles, had a long confabulation with Jacob, scarcely moving the while. They were evidently in no hurry at home for that water.

"It is quite a fact, gentlemens—just as I told you."

"What is the fact, Jacob?"

"She says there *is* no doctor here—only the midwife."



A DRAWER OF WATER.

"Tell her that will do; and if her name happens to be Gamp, we will do her portrait."

The dread contingency of being suddenly taken ill on this remote island, and given over to the "Gamp," seemed to damp the spirits of our guide.

"Cheer up, Jacob. This is far better fun for you than



A FREEHOLDER OF MARKEN.

showing petroleum-stores and gin-mills to stray tourists. You are deeply enjoying yourself now, flirting with these girls."

Jacob allowed a passing film of an oily smile to spread over his Sancho-Panza-like countenance, and owed to his enjoyment; he even seemed to forget the famous table d'hôte he was bent on getting us back in time for.

The children were simply perfect, dressed something like

their elders in miniature, but with rather a confusion of ideas with regard to distinction of sex. There would be a small mite with long, fair hair, worn well over its eyes, and a frock; that would be a boy; there would be another mite with fair hair and baggy breeches; that would be a girl; then at a certain age they got changed back again; but all and sundry spotless and clean and well-behaved. We began sketching a baby, a very bundle of quaintness and rosy health. The little maid who tended it obligingly kept it quiet and well to the fore; and even when that particular sketch was finished, and a note was being made of a bit of fence and distance, the same little mite was brought and obligingly planted on the top rail, well in view, and kept as quiet as a lamb. We somehow made friends with the children from the very first. By that peculiar instinct with which kind mother Nature all the world over protects them in their weakness, they have a keen eye for those who love them. There is no humbugging them in odd moments, when it is to your interest to smile on them. They find you out.

Here in this remote islet, where a knowledge of baby Dutch idiom could not be expected of a perfect stranger, with no means of making friends with them except by tickling them under the ear or chin somewhere, we seemed to get on capitally. The mercenary idea was not part of their plan, either, for, although we had a pocket full of the trouser-button Dutch coinage, they only took it as a great favor, so as not to hurt one's feelings. There was that same free and independent air about even the smallest child that is characteristic of these islanders. The costume of the people, varied as it is, is kept strictly within certain laws. The baby, the child of five or six, the young girl of marriageable age, the betrothed, the wife, the widow, each and all wear, at the proper time, a certain distinguishing costume. These distinctions have been observed, and the costumes have



SMALL CITIZENS.

been the same, for centuries. I have an old Dutch book (1737) with the identical dress, and it is there spoken of as a very old costume. In that print there is the same fair hair, cut in a fringe straight across the brow, and level with the eyes. Some even seemed to look through the fringe with the bright, sharp twinkle of a beady-eyed Skye terrier. Others had the fringe brought level with the eyes, and then brushed up; this had a rather aggressive air, belonging, probably, to the caste of eligible young maidens. Let those who fancy that the fringe, or bang, as it is called in America, is a new fashion, go to Marken, and see it in its glory. In addition to the invariable fringe were the two invariable ringlets, one on each cheek, that were worn by all womankind from maid to matron; these were no small, mincing, bandolined "corkscrews," but goodly sized, loosely twisted tresses of gleaming hair.

A good straight throat, with splendid curves, a wide, close-fitting necklace of coral beads, with great gold clasp of archaic design, were almost universal features among the young women. The prevailing color in female dresses was of various shades of blue, from peacock to indigo and purple, and of red, from terra cotta to dark madder. These prevailing tints, all good, with a certain russet and olive, and a sad, discouraged green, made up the scale, with creamy whites and bits of black, not to mention lots of silver and gold ornaments and bits of embroidery. The eye-searing "Magenta" and the "arsenic" green, the sulphurous yellow, and the aniline abominations, they know not of, or, knowing of, care not for. Heaven forefend they ever may! Happy islanders! Remote, unfriended, melancholy—slow perhaps; but they have certain advantages, after all.

When the great epidemic of what is now called "evening dress" attacked every civilized male creature (and some who were not civilized) on the habitable globe, from the greatest

personage in the land to the humble green-grocer in guise of waiter, from the pompous butler to one's own father or father-in-law—generally confused *with* the butler, and ordered about sharply by careless guests—when this great weltering wave of costume rolled over us, the happy Markener, and a few other grown men on the outer fringe of civilization, escaped. What would happen if some leading spirit of the island should attend a few “At Homes” in Amsterdam, say?—would his devotion to baggy breeches and constellations of silver buttons give way to the tight trousers and steel-pen-tailed coat? Let no one ever invite him out; he is far better as he is. Marken is not a very large place, all told—a few low sand-mounds, the exact number varying with the tide; about three miles would take one entirely round the outside lines of the group. Each mound is connected, somehow, with the other—by little swing-bridges chiefly. Nearly every house has its separate embankment and its own little moat, and its own boat—in case of flood—moored handy by the door. The houses are all of wood, except the parson's and the church; these edifices are of brick, not very ancient, as the entire place has been flooded and burned and pillaged, in the good old times, more than its share.

The principal mound, on which the church and school stand, is the most important; the most aristocratic, so to speak. Another mound contains another “circle” around the lighthouse; another, the dock; and, another, the cemetery. This is the highest of the embankments, or they would not be able to dig a grave without getting below water-mark: as it is, the high tide must somewhat dampen the poor departed. Each of these important points has its little “set.” There was, even among those happy islanders, a slight feud respecting the relative importance of their respective positions. They were *all* obliged, however, to be very civil to the cemetery elevation, or it was made

unpleasant for them on the occasion of a burial. Jacob inquired very kindly after this feud, and we found that it was going on a little livelier than ever, if anything, since the choosing of the new burgomaster. We missed some of the humor of the situation, which must have had much in common with the reign of "Peter the Headstrong" in New Amsterdam. Jacob was far too statistical, and went into dull figures, with which I will not trouble the reader. We saw a few of the interiors, and clean to a degree they were, spotless and polished fully up to the Broek standard; with lots of blue-and-white china and old Delft-ware on dressers and decorating the walls. The lovers of bric-à-brac would feel themselves at home in this remote haven.

The old brass-hinged chests, the carved cabinets and buffets, the old tall clocks, the hanging, brass-faced clocks, not to mention one or two, not old nor brass, that, I'll be sworn, came from Connecticut!—the only one thin, fatal edge of anachronism we saw, and to think—so near home! There was no mistaking that rectangular sacrilege of Time, with its lithographic view of Pittsfield court-house on the pane. Perhaps it kept very good time; they do, now and then; and the Down-east clock peddler, did he adventure there, too? The thought is too interesting. There were brass warming-pans brandished all about the walls in the most reckless and artistic manner, great pewter and—for aught I would swear—silver mugs and tankards disposed about, brazen candlesticks and lanterns polished like gold, curtains and hangings of spotless white, or, most often, white-and-blue, chintz, blue and white tiles in chimney-places, and red-tiled floors. What more would one have to sing harmonies of color to the eye? When the ever-rising wave of æsthetic culture reaches Marken, there will be but little to teach these simple island fisher-folk. Indeed, there were sunflowers galore already growing in many little gardens. One missed the peacock

plumes, certainly, and the soft, clinging draperies; in fact, the garments of the women were the reverse of "clinging." It was the one great, consuming ambition of every woman to wear as many petticoats as she could comfortably carry about; it was the one great sign of opulence—no illusory hoop or crinoline, but six or seven good, substantial, swelling underskirts.

Lest some painfully pure and cultured person should suppose that one sees nothing higher and nobler to enjoy than these simple things, we will hasten to explain that, in our sadder and wiser moments, we much prefer the Elgin Marbles or the Venus of Milo; and that, when we find our memory dwelling rather too fondly on scenes like these, we bring out a little antique bronze of Diana (picked up on a bric-à-brac forage), we gaze on that, refresh our eyes, and ask to be forgiven. Let us also own that, in moments of depression and slightly impaired health, we turn to Botticelli and Fra Angelico, and almost forget that there is such a thing as a rosy fisher-girl or a bronzed mariner worthy of serious attention. The men-folks of Marken are seldom at home except on Sundays. We only saw a few, and thoroughly fine, stalwart fellows they were—bronzed, blue-eyed, defiant-looking, still, kindly enough, withal. They seemed to keep a tolerably watchful eye, however, on the two strange beings straying among their women and children with sketch-book and pencil.

These men are said to be quite remarkable in one respect—they are nearly all teetotallers, and the others are very temperate. They are, also, highly moral and religious. About the only "redeeming vice" they have is smoking. Crime is quite unknown in the community; at least, so they say. The only rakish thing we saw there was a solitary billiard-room; but, go wherever you will, no matter how remote the place may be, there will, at least, be billiards. Every little hamlet, every ghost of a hamlet, will offer its semblance of a "table." It is a pleas-



TOLL.

ant thing to think that there is a favored spot where lovely combinations of color harmonies, as a born instinct, meet your ravished gaze, combined with many human virtues. A high art and teetotal congress might hold a series of revels on this happy isle, and have a good time. The principal drink of the people is weak coffee and tea, in rather large quantities. Whatever it is, they are rosy and strong, and do credit to it.

There are rather singular marriage and burial customs here, naturally, for, when a people all agree to dress in such an orig-

inal and extraordinary manner, it would ill become their state of picturesqueness to do any of the ordinary affairs of life like anybody else. The houses, too, have a certain touch about their order of architecture that lends an indescribable "operatic" air to the whole place.

Gladly would we have stayed on, but declining day and tide, captain and Jacob, would wait no longer. So we folded our sketching-stools, and were led away regretfully. There was the promise of an entertaining sunset to enhance the effect of receding Marken, as we sped on homeward over the gray, lumpy waves of the Zuider Zee. With a brisk, rising wind fair in her sail, the "yacht" fled like a tired cab-horse to his oats and stable. This is not a strictly nautical illustration of what I mean, but I wished to avoid saying that "she walked the waters like a thing of life." We soon ran our little race before the wind, and swung up to the dock at Monnickendam in fine style. Goodness knows what stories the driver of our ebon steeds had managed to tell about the "Brazilians" during our absence, but they appeared to have awakened a lively interest in our coming back among the little-to-do inhabitants, as the previous half who saw us off had evidently been increased by as large a portion of the other half as could manage to be there to see the return. Good-humored, and a little inclined to chaff, perhaps, but our happy innocence of their peculiar *patois* was a good abiding shield. The interest broke out into something like enthusiasm when the pleasing ceremony of settling up with the skipper was performed. Paying out a number of massive silver coins, each as big as an old Spanish dollar (with an extra one in as drink-money), must have been a rather effective display to the on-lookers.

They fell in with the procession to the waiting mourning-coach, forming around it ten deep as we got in. Never a sound



SMALL PEOPLE OF MARKEN.

until we started ; and then, after one good analytical stare, arose a very respectable sort of cheer from the kindly folk. They evidently had not seen any "Brazilians" for a long time. Jacob was rather proud of his little joke. We could not help remarking, as we rumbled away in the twilight, "How cheap and hollow is popularity!" also, "What humbugs we are, and what humbugs we pursue!" These and other philosophic reflections we could not resist: they ever torment the spirit when one is hungry and cross. I own to much of the one condition and a little of the other.

Poor Jacob was evidently a prey to the sad reflection that the famous table-d'hôte would be a thing of the past by the time we reached our hotel, and, indeed, that exhilarating festivity had long since run its various courses when we arrived, not exactly "dead-tired," but with a good solid hunger and thirst, begotten of the day's enjoyments and the sea-air, that we would not have parted with under a good round sum before the proper moment. The proper moment soon came, in the shape of as comforting a little supper as any one half famished could wish for. What a change, though, back to the brilliantly lighted banqueting-hall, and the solemn, polyglot waiters in full dress—visions of archaic costumes, golden and silvern bedight maidens, spinning through one's brain meanwhile! I, for one, felt as if we had, since morning, been to the moon, awake or in a dream, and had tumbled off or awakened with a start.

"And now, gentlemens, what about to-morrow? Do you take it easy about town, and think it over—or what?" Before that little supper we might have listened to the faithful Jacob's hint, for his own ease and ours.

"What time does the Friesland boat go?"

"Nine in the morning."

"Good; that's our boat."

"You will go? Very well. Take warm things; be all ready, standing in the hall, by half-past eight, and leave the rest to me."

What a relief! What a lot of "rail and boat time-table" bewilderment saved us! Angel of a Jacob!



JACOB.

CHAPTER VI.

OFF FOR FRIESLAND.

THE faithful Jacob, having probably noticed during his short experience with us a certain disposition on our part to leave things generally to Providence and himself, thought it well, before bidding us good-night on the eve of our setting out for Friesland, to offer us a few words of wisdom, and, so to speak, define his position.

“Now, gentlemens, I shall order your breakfast at a certain hour, and the carriage at a certain hour, and I will call you to the minute. Now, if you will always *jump* as soon as I call you, there will never be any troubles.”

These and many other injunctions, to which were added a number of worthy precepts more or less applicable to the subject, were prodded well into us with that solemn fat forefinger, that seemed made for pointing morals and adorning tales.

Next morning, bright and early, everything was as ready to the minute as the worthy one could wish, and he was not only ready, but gorgeous, for the occasion. Noticing that our fascinated gaze seemed unable to get away from the blaze of a large, old-fashioned diamond “breastpin” and chain nestling in the spacious folds of a black satin scarf, the Faithful proceeded to elucidate :

“I see dot you look at my pin. S’e is an *air loam*.”

“A what?”

Jacob tried another version : “An *ear loom*.”

We still looked puzzled—wanting a few more versions.

“A *heer loom*. S’e was left to me py my grandfather; s’e belongs by my family; s’e is a present; s’e was left me in a *will*. Now you onderstand?”

“Oh, yes—an heirloom.”

“Dot’s it.”

“Aren’t you afraid of being robbed or murdered?”

“Oh, no; I never was hurt yet, and I always got him when I go on long scursions; I dink s’e is safer wiz me as s’e is at home, if de house purn down. Pesides,” added he, with a fat, pleased smile, as he struggled to overcome his double chin, and get a glimpse of his treasure among the folds of his cravat, “I tink s’e looks *nice*—don’t you?”

Of course we did; it was the very thing we wanted to give a proper *chic* to the party. It lent a certain air of truthfulness to Jacob’s tales of our Brazilian nativity; for if our very guide and factotum could disport gems of antiquity and price like unto this, what could not *we* do if we thought it worth our while to care for such vanities! Then came to mind the playful advice of an old traveller and sketcher in Holland—advice half forgotten until we saw the blaze of Jacob’s “buzzum-pin.”

“One thing bear in mind now,” said the friend; “buy, beg, or borrow the biggest and most exasperating diamond ring or pin, or *both*, if possible, that money or love can procure, and wear such blazery wherever you go.” We thought this the usual *blague d’atelier*, and looked impervious. “No, no—*fact*, I assure you,” insisted he. “I’ll tell you why. The people there are awfully rich—even the poor. If they see you sketching in the street with a big diamond ring on, they will at once put you down as *somebody*, merely doing that sort o’ thing for your amusement, and not some poor devil obliged to do it for a living.” This was all very well for the friendly adviser, to



IN FRIESLAND.

whom diamond rings were a matter of mere "detail," and who would rather prefer to be looked upon as a swell amateur than to suffer the occasional winds of rough-and-ready criticism to visit his cheek too roughly; but for those who have gone through much thick and thin in the matter of sketching adventure, even the little diversions of the Scheveningen fish-girls, who will sometimes (*on dit*) finish a sketch for you by rubbing a handful of wet sand into it, have not enough of the disagreeables to induce one to invest in any such costly talismans against the evil as he suggested. Besides, he was a known *farceur*. Anyhow, nonsense or not, we felt a goodly share of pride in "Jacob's dream," as we promptly christened the heirloom. Artful old boy! how he used to hold his double chin well up whenever he caught our eyes gazing on its splendors! Again it was the mourning coach and the Roman steeds of darkness that conveyed us to the steamer. Good speed too—I think that Jacob called it the funeral *return* pace. He had surely some side interest in the undertaking business.

The steamer was not, after all, that soul of punctuality that we were led to believe the night before. It had even less of unseemly haste to get off than the ordinary Dutch express train. "Punctuality is the thief of time: have you heard that proverb before, Jacob?" "Yes, gentlemen, I *have* heard it; but at de same time s'e is well always to be to de minnet, as I have know dese tam steamer to go off just at de time dey say so." One soon gets used to this dignified way of getting about, but, all the same, one cannot help wondering if Dutchmen travelling in strange lands do not find that trains and boats do not wait for them there as they do at home. Luckily, we were never in a hurry. Once on the boat or train, there was no end of amusing things to see; in fact, we were often taken away from just-begun sketches that we would have gladly

stopped longer to finish. It was pleasant to take notes of the various little pictures made by the tangle of brown-sailed, broad-beamed craft. We had even time to observe the light-some and free ways of the Dutch female sailor—not romantically disguised as a boy, but sporting a distinct (tarry, more or less) costume of her own; not so very different either from the real boy; or, rather, his dress, in one important particular, is a lame imitation of hers. He wears a pair of baggy breeches, so very voluminous and petticoaty that one has to turn to other peculiarities of dress in order to be on the safe side of judgment.

There is one way of telling the boy from the girl, however, as far as you can see them, as *he* does a deal of vigorous looking on and smoking, while *she* does some very pretty pulling and hauling and poling the boat about, in harbor, especially. We saw one athletic young maiden shy a coil of rope for a youth on another boat to catch. He did not get his hands out of his capacious pockets quickly enough, so the rope caught him playfully about the ears; whereupon ensued a rattling interchange of compliments (probably), between these two at first, and then the female sailor belonging to the lubber's boat "sailed in"—to use a strictly nautical term; and then it soon developed into a *partie carrée*, as the old man at the rudder of the rope-slinging maiden's boat opened fire. He was a master-hand at profanity, that aged mariner. It was just getting hot, and deeply interesting to us on-lookers, when our boat drew out, with a well-directed broadside of invective from our crew, bestowed impartially and liberally on all concerned, for not getting out of the way.

The great locks of Schellingwoude that let you out into the Zuider Zee are worthy objects of interest to those of engineering tastes—huge piles of abstruse masonry, machinery, and



A SKETCH AT SCHELLINGWOUDE.

iron, so solid and serious, so free from anything frivolous, that I feel tempted to assume scientific knowledge enough to weight this rambling article with a saving ballast of solid matter. Why shouldn't I? Thousands of people write about matters more abstruse—art, for instance—of which they know infinitely less than an artist knows about engineering, and they manage to come off with *éclat*. Why should we not have the credit of making those great, hulking locks feel small and humiliated? It would not be difficult to do it. They really lack the elements of simplicity and quiet that mark the locks on the upper Thames. There are no flowers, no ginger-beer, no bending reeds or waving willows, no free gush of water here and there through the chinks in the leaky woodwork, all of which lend such an air of picturesqueness to a fine old river lock. These comparisons, skilfully brought to bear, would pass for criticism very well, and we should escape the reproach of having gone through one of the most noble monuments of modern engineering skill without a word of appreciation.

These locks, the pride of Holland, that seem to hold two mighty floods by the throat with a gigantic, stony grasp, and to keep the seas at bay, surely deserve more worthy comment than we know how to give them. It is not our purpose to introduce guide-book matter in the way of statistics; we had only about ten minutes' survey of those mighty works, and those minutes were given mostly to things pictorial. We own to being impressed, even dazed, by these splendid examples of Dutch engineering skill, to say nothing of courage and enterprise. And now we will pass out on to the broad swash of the rolling Zuider Zee. It is more in our line. Lest the ordinary reader be inclined to think lightly of that sea, which has been so often compared to the ambitious draught of a thirsty Dutchman, I will merely remark at the outset—at the first billow,

in fact—that there was the prospect of a long, eight-hours' journey before us. I do not wish to say anything more disrespectful to this bit of water than that it looks for all the world like a temporary inundation on a large scale. Even the distant spires and trees, rising above level lines of dikes, seem to be, and in many instances are in fact, below the water-level; and when we ran in near to land now and then, the chimneys and weathercocks, and the tops of the willow-trees, just peering over the rim of the dikes, gave one a very uncomfortable feeling, as if they were, according to every rule of perspective, about twenty feet under water. There were not many passengers that day, and, without any disrespect to the few, they were not interesting from the point of view of the seeker after types of costume or character. A partial exception was an old lady with the close-fitting gold helmet of Friesland—the only remnant of the national dress to which she had clung. The rest of the dress was strictly non-committal, so far as period, country, and fashion were concerned—except the bonnet. That was a thing to make angels weep. At the risk of being thought rude, it was important to find out all about that bonnet; and unless one stared interminably that was impossible. It had a singular fascination about it, not because of its own merits, but simply on account of its comical anachronism. It was a weird combination, that solid golden helmet, with rosettes of gold filigree at each temple, and over this a cap of Brussels lace with flowing lappets, and perched high on this arrangement this Paris bonnet, of the fashion of a few years ago, brave with mauve ribbon and artificial flowers! She was a dear, motherly old lady, with a sad, benevolent face; but, for all that, as she leaned over the vessel's side, contemplating the distant shore and the approaching *mal de mer*, every ribbon of that wondrous bonnet streaming in the breeze, she was a picture.



ON THE FRIESLAND BOAT.

And even when the inevitable struggle with seasickness proved too much for her, and she sat with the steward's well-known bit of faience on her knee, the mauve ribbons waving over the golden head-gear, she was still a picture—but not for our purpose. Sadly devoid of adventure was that day. We only touched at a few of the grass-grown towns, and saw little to note in the brief period it took to debark or take on the few passengers. It was dusk when we got to the end of our journey by boat at Harlingen, and Leeuwarden remained to be reached by train.

CHAPTER VII.

LEEWARDEN.

THE station was across the dock and town, and as our guide was a stranger to the new order of things, he chartered a small boy, with a pair of enormous white sabots, to lead the way, and, as a further badge upon him, he was given a white sketching-bag, slung over his back, so that we should not lose sight of him in the thickening gloom. Small need of the bag, as the sight (and clang) of his wooden "shoon" would have been sufficient guidance. How he did speed, that small boy, through narrow alleys, over narrow canal footways, stout Jacob wheezing after him, and we after Jacob! It was a good half-hour's race, with a few hair-breadth escapes of getting overboard into dock or canal. How bright and cheery the railway station refreshment-room seemed after the gloom and cold drizzle of out-doors! By the way, a refreshment-room in a Dutch station is something so entirely different from similar affairs on most railways as to be almost worthy of description. It is roomy and bright and clean, but the space given to the sale and consumption of refreshments is somewhat restricted, and the choice of things to sustain and refresh is, to a stranger, embarrassing. The pappy bun, like a loaf cut in half, and sandwiched with beef, ham, cheese, or sausage, is ever to the fore, safe and good enough. But the appetite in search of other luxuries will find more to bewilder than to tempt in the array of slabs and wedges of a material

that looks like bits of tessellated pavement of a simple and severe pattern. Sometimes this is a section of sausage; sometimes it is a sort of sweet stuff; again, it is a kind of flat cake; but in nearly every case the ambition is to get it as crisp, hard, and dotty as the remains of a Roman villa flooring. Tea and coffee are always there, and always good, besides a large assortment of almost all sorts of beverages. In the present instance the young woman who dispensed these good things spoke most of the modern languages, and English so very well that she seemed, with that gold head-gear, to be an English girl in fancy dress.

It was a short run to Leeuwarden, and we soon were kindly welcomed (also in good English) by the host of its Doelen Hotel. As we had nursed our wolfish appetites past the blandishments of the station refreshment-counter, the cosy dining-room, bright fire, and pretty little dinner came to our eyes and appetites like a grateful balm. And when, over coffee and cigars, the landlord came in with that very week's *Punch*, *Graphic*, and *Illustrated News*, we began to remember that, before starting, something was said by the then croaking but now beaming Jacob about the necessity of being prepared to "rough it" up in Friesland.

"Why, you solemn old bird of ill omen, what did you expect us to want? Do you call this rough? Was not the Burgundy like a solution of a rosy sunset in June?"

"Well, yes, I dinks she is," assented the faithful one, after a momentary struggle with the question. "You see dot op in dese old towns dey get some such old wine dot she don't get down in blaces like Amsterdam very often."

"And how about cigars?"

"Oh, de best cigars, too, you get here."

"And coffee and tea?"

"Yes—oh, de virst-rate tea and coffee."

"That is not much like roughing it, Jacob."

"Well, you see, dot depend on what you pe 'customed to. Some gentlemens I drafels wiz dey like to vloat about in kondolas in Venice, and some like de schnow moundain-dops in Schwizzerland; some like de picksher-kallery in Florence, and so on. Dem sort of gentlemens call dis op here 'roughing it.' Sure. Dot's all I know. But you will zee to-morrow."

On the morrow the dear old boy proposed to "rough it" by getting a carriage and driving a few miles out of town to show us a fine old château. This hardship we agreed to without a murmur. But, beforehand, why not drive all over town—up and down and around generally? We could then judge if it were worth a more careful investigation on foot.

Leeuwarden is not at all one of the so-called "dead cities of the Zuider Zee." On the contrary, it is a very lively, bright, modernized, flourishing sort of a town. The inhabitants evidently prefer a splendid, Parisian-looking, new store, with a vast expanse of plate-glass, and a goodly show of jewelry, confectionery, or drapery, to the small but picturesque show-windows of the olden time. A good idea of the ease and wealth of an old Dutch city may be formed from the number and magnificence of the goldsmiths' and pastry-cooks' shops, and in Leeuwarden they are as numerous as gin-palaces and pawnbrokers in a poor quarter of London. In fact, these evidences of Frisian thrift were so numerous and overpowering that we fled for relief to the one poor little part of the town. It was down a very "Petticoat Lane" of a street that we turned. There were the usual kinds of shops that abound in such a neighborhood—chiefly of marine stores, slop clothes, refreshments, rattle-trappery, and even, in its more respectable



FISHER GIRL OF FRISIA.

form, that which might be called bric-à-brac of a certain kind. We halted before a better one of this sort of place. There were certain indications of nice bits of *old* blue—the nearly black old indigo tint—and in the far shadows of the back shop was a strong suspicion of some interesting old silver. Old brass things seemed to be “in the air,” and things that looked like bits of good old wood-carving peeped out from among the ruck of common modern gimcrackery which, because it had come to a premature state of dilapidation, tried to pass itself off as an honest *article de vertu*, or even as good bric-à-brac of a respectable ancestry. We found, on nearer inspection, but very few really tempting things, and we also found, as usual, that the frowzy woman in charge did not know their prices. She soon sent a fleet-footed little maiden in search of the husband, who returned as fast as his legs could carry him, in a high state of excitement, and ravenous for a bargain. “Only a pound” (he could speak a little English) seemed to be the smallest price he could think of, and for things not worth more than a florin. The ground had been pretty well raked over by the keen hunters from Amsterdam and the larger Dutch towns, and as in the larger towns we had found the same things cheaper, not to say better, we were not recklessly lavish with our pounds in that stuffy little shop. When the excited husband had cooled down a little he began to listen to his wife’s mild hints to abate. She had nervously followed at his heels, evidently appalled at the awful sums he was asking. Very soon the florin took the place of the pound, and he was glad to sell even at that. He had a few articles of old Frisian costume that we took at about twice the value. But, oh, the wild excitement in that lane! Our chariot had gone on to the end, where the way was wide enough to let other things pass, and we walked on, headed by Jacob bearing the

bundles. It was not enough for them to stand in the doorways and beckon to us. Some got into the roadway and tried to sell us every sort of thing the street dealt in, from carved bedsteads to smoked eels. It was that chariot and pair, and Jacob, with his diamond pin, bearing away the plunder, that made the frenzy what it was.

There were a few side veins to this one poor artery of poverty. We glanced down them as we passed. They were mostly swarming with children. Between the windows of the houses were stretched lines of clothes out to dry; they were flapping in the air. It made a dusky grove of the narrow way; and they were not the balmy odors of an orange grove that were wafted to us as we passed them. Even in these poor streets we saw fleeting glimpses of working-women scavenging, hanging out clothes, huckstering, and all wearing silver head-gear, and some with golden ornaments: they looked like great metallic-headed beetles flitting about in the dusky shadows.

We tried another little old shop down by the water's edge. It was the same tale—few things worth having, and those at fancy prices. (Five pounds for a fly-specked old engraving with a worm-eaten frame! Jacob translated for the ferrety old dame: "She zay he is very scarce, almost never now—dot picksher—nobody has got 'im now but she." We did not rob her of it. They were of little or no profit to either of us, these bric-à-brac hunts. Still, there was always the chance of a stray bit of good "color"—some bit of "azure," or "lemon," or "sang de bœuf" crackle. Vain quest!—it was not worth the soiled gloves one got in turning over the grimy rubbish.

We found all through Holland a most extravagant value attached to good old Delft ware. The Delft imitations of Japanese ware were valued far more than the originals, while for old Delft pottery with Biblical subjects, or with the sets of the



LEEWARDEN GOSSIP.



"Months" or the "Seasons," there was no sum thought too much to ask.

I remember seeing a rather fine pair of old jars in the window of a somewhat modern furniture shop; they were unusually good—a Dutch imitation of a kind of "Hawthorne" pattern. We went in to ask the price. They were not for sale. "Were they already sold?" "No." "Then why in the window?" "Oh, to attract customers." "But what is the sense of attracting customers for them if they won't sell them?" Jacob was translating back and forth, and was getting personally hot and resentful, far beyond our sentiments in the matter. The idea of the shopman seemed to be that the customer for the vases, finding them not for sale, would then in desperation buy veneered wardrobes, four-post bedsteads, and kitchen chairs! Whether this had paid him in any way we did not seek to know. I know that we did not pay.

For their own personal tastes the very knowing Dutch collectors only buy and *keep* the very fine wee bits of delicate blue of that "sky after rain" tint—so rare—the white of that soft "creamy" tone that is almost unique. These little bits they enshrine in morocco cases, velvet lined, and it is the correct thing to hold one's breath when the case is opened, for fear of accidents. It is not only in paste and color that these little jewel-cased specimens are so different from the ordinary run of blue-and-white—the art itself is of another kind almost. It is more individual, and not so conventional. The little pieces were not done by the workmen in some factory, but by the court painter of some great prince.

I might be inclined to apologize for this blue-and-white digression were it not for the fact that this particular craze is so much a thing of Holland that it might almost be called part of its history. How many of the lucky ones went bric-à-brac

hunting in the Netherlands with exceeding good "finds" a dozen years or so ago! And how many of the simple of faith go in these later days and come back wiser and sadder from the quest! I will not say, "Alas!" as I belong to neither party.

We did not see much to impress us in the way of architecture as we drove about Leeuwarden. There were some superior modern houses—large club-house-looking places—and notable government buildings. Plate-glass and stone or stucco seemed the correct idea. The streets were wide and well paved—the boulevard had triumphed over the canal—and the gay Mansard roof was crowding out the old Dutch gable. There was a town-hall more or less interesting. The style was French, of the rococo period; it had merely a slight Dutch accent. There was a very fine prison too (the "Chancellerie," built in 1504), that they were very vain of; it was supposed to be rather a favor to be locked up in it—according to Jacob.

The costumes were not remarkable, except in respect of the golden head-gear of the women. The Frisian women are generally very handsome, especially about Leeuwarden. The men were fine, sturdy, frank, kindly fellows, and every one seemed happy and good-tempered.

It was all delightful and bright, but, when one expects to rough it, this degree of style and comfort bores one, and sends him in search of the unpleasant. Perhaps the country on the way to Jacob's famous "château" would be more to our taste. The first impressions of it, as we saw it on either side of the well-paved, long, level stretch of road, were that it had never lost any spare time or ground in trying to be picturesque. There were none of the little accidents of hill, dale, or stream to mar its far-stretching simplicity. Fat black and white cows, and drowsy, pale-eyed sheep, thin of leg and long of tail, but heavy and white in fleece, were pasturing in rich, fat, lush



AN OLD GATEWAY.

meadows as far as the eye could see—so far into the dim horizon that, where the sky mingled its haze with the haze of the distant fields, it was difficult to say where white dots of beasts left off and the little cloudlets of the sky began. On either side of the road were willows or plane-trees, planted with all the uniformity of the accompanying telegraph poles. Outside the rows of trees ran the green-mantled, rush-fringed ditches. There are very few fences or hedges in any part of Holland. Now and again we would come to a tall gate just over a little wooden bridge crossing the weedy moat. The gate would not be continued on either side of the bridge by fence or railing—nothing but itself above ground. Beyond the gate would be a thriving farmstead, bright, orderly, and evidently reeking with prosperity. The little green duck-weedy moat would encircle the house and belongings; a sweet, peaceful little wooden summer-house would perch prettily over the verdant pool, and often in the afternoon might be seen contented rustics revelling therein in tea and “koecken,” as if rheumatism had no terrors for them. I don’t wish to be thought perverse, but I must say that after a few miles of these calm delights, this moving panorama of prosperity began to pall slightly. This was not the kind of thing, delightful as it was, that we came so far to see. When may we look forward to some interesting discomfort? Even a *little* acute misery would be a relief. “Jacob, awake! Where *is* this château?” In a few moments we actually went up a gentle hill, an elevation of about two feet to the hundred. It was something to wake one up in Holland. And soon the château came upon us with so delightful a surprise that we accepted without a murmur the promise of a charming visit, and a further dose of unmixed pleasure.

It was, indeed, a fine old place. The orders of architecture were somewhat mixed. It had a small portion of fifteenth cen-

tury, and then it was added to largely and well in the seventeenth, and tinkered up here and there in the eighteenth, and all but made nonsensical in a few spots in the early nineteenth; but these bad places were few, and not prominent, mostly showing in the in-door decoration of a few rooms. There was a fine wide moat all around, and here and there steps leading to the water, a moss-stained, gray stone wall, a stately, carved gateway, stone seats on either side, many tall, shadowing trees within and without the grounds, and—delight of delights to the country about, far beyond the building itself—there was a tall rock-work fountain, of the kind that one so tepidly admires in the Bois de Boulogne. The rock-work was of stucco or cement, sea-shells were jammed into it, ferns were coaxed to grow over it, and when the water had been pumped up from the moat to a reservoir over the gateway, so as to get a fall, and then turned on, the effect was a thing of joy to all beholders. The beaming old housekeeper was so bent on showing us the cascade that it would have been a cruel blow if we had not patiently watched the exhibition to the end. It took only about ten minutes to empty the cistern. There was no surprise or variety in the display, only a steady dribble over the plaster rocks. We applauded, to please the good dame, but did not cry encore, as we might have had to pump. It was painfully funny, too, to see this shoddy rock-work excrescence marring the whole effect of that grand old courtyard and house. Why could we not speak boldly out, and say, “Good vrouw, this base imposture is an eyesore and a childish fraud, and you may say so to your good masters”? We smiled so unreservedly, however, instead of saying anything of the kind, that no doubt we shall be spoken of as two strange gentlemen from the far Americas, who came all across the ocean on purpose to admire that cascade. The old house itself, without having any real resemblance, somehow



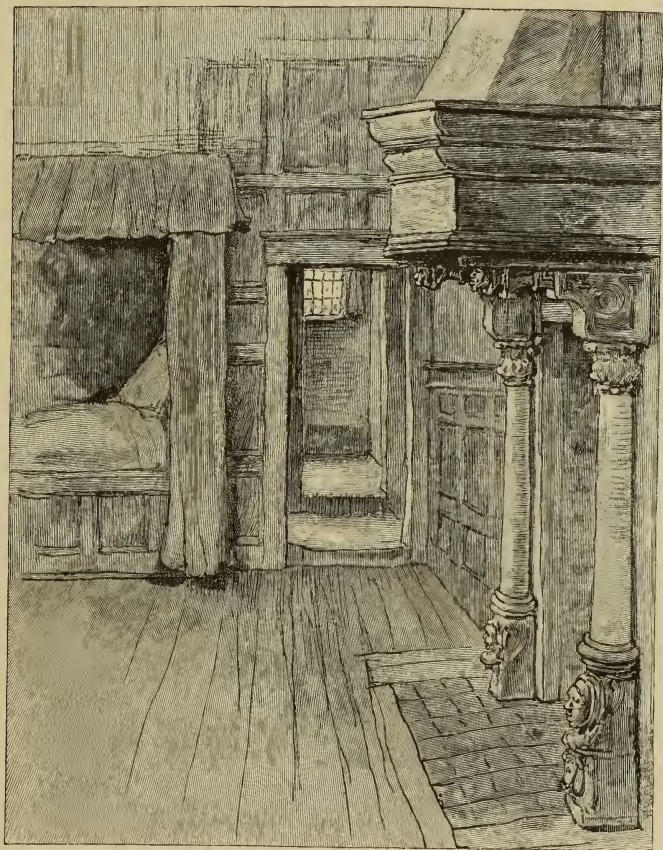
IN CHURCH.

reminded us of Haddon Hall. Of course, it is in better preservation. It belongs to three bachelor brothers living in Leeuwarden, who use it as a summer retreat, sometimes in turn, sometimes all together. Each has his own suite of rooms, and they all enjoy it in common. They share the revenues and pay the expenses equally. Sometimes the place is nearly filled with the combined friends and the three hosts. We were shown all over the house unreservedly. Three rooms were unfurnished, and on the floors and shelves were piles of fragrant apples and pears, equally divided—each brother his room and his fruit. There was the separate smoking-room of each, and the great general smoking-room, and the billiard and card room of all, besides.

G.H.B.

The dining-room was very perfect: high dado of oak paneling, walls covered with warm old golden Spanish leather, old oaken cabinets, some very finely carved—one or two of fifteenth-century work, but mostly of seventeenth—some really good pictures—portraits of the leading members of the family for many generations. One large picture was a view of the house when it was in its prime. There was the grand old courtyard (long before the sham fountain); there were gay cavaliers with brodered cloaks, buff boots, laced doublets, and jewelled rapiers; ladies with those wondrous satin gowns and Flemish ruffs that Terburgh knew so well how to paint; children with bunched-out gowns that came down to the rosettes of their embroidered buff shoes; a great regal-looking ark of a high-hung, painted-panelled coach, drawn by four dappled steeds—these and all the surroundings of bygone splendor were therein set forth. There was the same gateway, the same stone seats, the same steps leading to the moat. Besides the pictures were brass sconces for candles, mirrors in ebony frames, and many plates of old Japanese blue-and-red ware—the indigo blue, and the red like bullock's blood—and the design harmonized with flowers in flat gold. The cabinets were garnished with great beakers and flagons of glass and various metals. The floor was of polished oak, and the chimneypiece of carved oak and tiles. One sees just such interiors again and again in Dutch pictures of the time. In fact, we seemed to have walked bodily into a large picture. There was a mellow tone over all; even the light that filtered in through parchment-colored stained glass seemed like the light in a De Hooe. The blacks were not the cold, harsh, chilling, modern blacks, but deep and warm, like the lowest notes on an old church organ. Every tint, every tone, was part of the one pervading golden harmony! How fortunate, too, that no vulgar ambition to improve and alter had led any one

of the past generations to change the arrangement of a single thing in this one room! How many had been born to this room, lived with it all their lives, and left it as they happily



BEDROOM IN THE OLD CHÂTEAU.

found it! May they rest peacefully in their tombs for that one virtue alone!

In the common smoking-room were three separate racks of long clay and other pipes, three large jars of tobacco, and each had its attendant display of ash-trays and pipe-lights. Three

sets of spirit-bottles and wine-glasses, and three groups of tankards and mugs, were in three corner cupboards. What festive times they must have had, and still have, now and then, this worthy trio!

We were shown an old panelled bedroom, with the bed set in an alcove. There had been no rearrangement here, either; everything was of two hundred years ago in the way of furniture. There was no fading, or moth or rust or dust, to mark the passing years. The high, carved chimneypiece was kept as well; the brass firedogs and the tongs and shovel shone like gold. We were left a long time in it to ourselves, to make sketches, and would gladly have stayed longer.

We mounted the turret stair to the roof in the old part, to get a view of the country. It lay beneath us like a faintly tinted old map. Far in the distance was a faint streak of the Zuyder Zee, and all between were long, straight lines of glimmering canals and rivers. Little clusters of green trees, where toy-like spires peeped out, told where the little villages were nestled away. The people and the horses, crawling along the straight, interminable roads, looked like ants. But all was movement, coming and going—no lonely or deserted spot anywhere. In the black spots where the turf-pits were, little figures were digging and cutting and wheeling away like mad. The innumerable flocks and herds were ever shifting and creeping about the flat wastes of green pasture. Shepherds and cowherds and milkmaids and other pastoral figures were plodding picturesquely about in liberal proportions to the cattle; and as all the little sounds from the field-labor came to us on the delicious breeze, we could not repress a quiet grin at Jacob. We did not say, "Do you call *this* roughing it?" but he knew what we were thinking of.

The old lady must have thought we had come to spend the

day, so long did we linger, so often did we go back to certain things just to have another look. There was, perhaps, just the ghost of a hint in the good vrouw's suggestion that we would, no doubt, like to see the kitchen before we went. "By all means!"

It was no common, out-of-the-way, down-stairs back place, that kitchen, as we soon found. It was a roomy hall, opening on a sunny garden, bright, sweet, and spotless. It, too, had been left unmodernized. Jan Steen or De Hooze might have sat down and painted the entire place, old lady and all, without finding a single thing to surprise him, except, perhaps, a tiny little sewing-machine, that looked homesick and lonely, in a corner. No description can do full justice to the perfect harmony of form and tone of this quiet arrangement in blue and white tiles, and gold, copper, and silver looking *batterie de cuisine*. The great black leopard of a cat uncoiled and stretched himself on the ample cushion of the broad arm-chair, and then, rolling himself again into a ball, took no further note of us. When we arrived, we had evidently called the good dame away from peeling onions and reading the Bible. There were her spectacles between the leaves, to mark the place; there was the knife between the coats of the onion. Over all, like incense, seemed a mingled aroma of sweet peace, virtue, piety, and savory stew. She was glowingly proud of her kitchen. It was broad and ample and capable. She had shown us the rest of the *château* with a sense of being a *belonging* of the place, but this was her very own domain, and the rest of the house and grounds, even the cascade, was nothing to it, in her eyes.

We wrote our names and addresses in the visitors' book, and, if Jacob *had* been telling that dear old lady that we were Brazilians, he should have arranged with us accordingly.

Back again, by another road, to town. It might, however, have been the same one over again, so much did they re-

seemble each other in the placid uniformity of their general features.

If those favored mortals who pride themselves on the perfect regularity of their facial lines could only, for once, see how much they resemble the monotonously perfect landscape in want of interest, they would court some happy accident in order to give their mask the charm of variety and expression. I know of one fine Greek-visaged youth who was immensely improved by the slight welt of a sabre-cut on one cheek, just in the right place, and not overdone. Since then neither himself nor his fond family would have the cheek fair and unscarred again for anything: not that it showed well as a mark of valor—he did not need that—but for mere pictorial considerations. There are certain antiquities in Leeuwarden well worth seeing; among others, the surviving tower of the old Church of St. Vitus. All the rest of the once fine building is level with the ground. The tower is of brick and stone work, early fifteenth century. Judging by this fragment, the design of the rest must have been very rich and ornate. It seems that the sea once came up to the very water-gates of the church—centuries ago—according to old charts and documents; but the gates are dust, and the sea is miles away, across the far-stretching meadows, behind the high-banked dikes. There was an old Frisian church here on this spot long before the one was built to which the crumbling tower belonged. In fact, Friesland reaches back into remote antiquity, it having been, so to say, discovered by a certain Friso, seeking peace and relief from royal family disputes in the East, somewhere about two centuries before the Christian era. He and his followers settled hereabouts, and gave the land the name it now bears. They built a temple to the worship of Stavo—or Jupiter—and the place was long called Stavora, now Stavoren. Friso's two brothers, Bruno and Saxo, went farther afield,

and founded what are now Brunswick and Saxony. But we will not digress. We merely mention these widely known facts to show that Friesland is not a place of last week, and that probably on this very spot, sacred to St. Vitus, there had been a few pagan altars, and then a remotely early Christian church or two, and then the series belonging to this leaning tower of brick, which, by the way, parted from its main body in 1500—as it were, only the day before yesterday. Friesland calls itself “Free Friesland” even to this day. It has never been very thoroughly mixed up and incorporated with Holland. The race type is quite different from that of North Holland, and the language is still a weariness to the other Dutchmen. We found many Frieslanders who spoke excellent English. They take to it as the Amsterdam people do to German, those of the Hague to French, and those of Rotterdam to English again.

But we seem to have forgotten the tower, through “dropping into” history, like Mr. Wegg. We tried the erudition of Jacob on the subject. “How old? Well, I should zay dot she is ofer a honderd years. Maybe more. I won’t be sure. Dis womans here, she say she know dat tower when ’er grand-moder was a little girl.” “It was long before that.” “Well, den, dot’s what I said to her. She must be t’ree honderd, perhaps a tousand.” Jacob always had a very elastic kind of knowledge, that obligingly stretched itself to the full extent of any possibility. As we thought it might be of interest to see the inside of this tower, he secured a small and eager boy, who delegated a little girl to bring the entire family who had the keys in charge. We did not find very much of interest on the main floor; the place seemed to be the chosen repository of all the ladders and trucks and old wheelbarrows of the neighborhood. The top story, where the “view” was to be had, must be attained by a series of these ladders, and they were in such num-

bers all about the place that it was difficult, in the dim, cobwebby obscurity, to get started on the right ones. Jacob, having conceived a marked antipathy to the small but daring boy, chose his own ladder, and we toiled up after him, to find ourselves landed somewhere beneath the rafters, among the spiders, against a blank wall, it seemed in the gloom. So we came down again, and the boy got rated for leading us astray. Then arose the question, "What should we see, after all, if we did go to the top?" Well, we should see the new prison and the old prison, and the new boulevards, where the old ramparts used to be, and where the old gates used to be before they were pulled down, and a lot more exciting things. It was tempting, but the spider-webs were not; so we took the thing for granted, and went forth into the air again. The small boy received his modest nickel gratuity with noisy derision, and was thereupon denounced by Jacob as a dishonor to his parents; he was then cuffed by the various owners of the keys of the tower. He retired from the scene in tears, accompanied by the sympathizing little girl, to be consoled, and to divide the proceeds. The final settlement with the entire family of keyholders was not effected without much lively wrangling. We left the little strife, and took notes of the general effects of grouping from afar. Jacob soon came to us, reporting damages at something under sixpence, and vowing never to revisit the scene of extortion so long as he lived. He called them very severe names in various languages, and even spoke disparagingly of the tower. Such are the effects of oblique prejudices! And yet, after all, our dusty grope up those ladders, and our sudden introduction to the spiders and bats, were the only moments of any approach to "roughing it" that we had encountered in Friesland. The little altercation with the key-keepers was Jacob's own affair. He fairly trembled with indignation, and found it difficult to

become calm again. We merely shook with merriment, and returned to seriousness with great difficulty.

The next day we discovered some very interesting old Frisian houses, after a little search. There was one that had evidently been an old book printer's and binder's, as the symbols of the craft were sculptured on a fine old stone tablet over the door. The costumes and appliances indicated the middle of



THE RIGHTEOUS EXPOSTULATIONS OF JACOB.

the seventeenth century as the period which claimed this fine old specimen. Many of these old tablets are painted in lively colors over the carving, and some of them have bits of gilding where escutcheons and arms occur. They all have, more or less, a certain charm of decorative effect, besides their historical interest. It is a fashion that, in this æsthetic age, is sure to revive, with good effect, as our habitations become more sug-

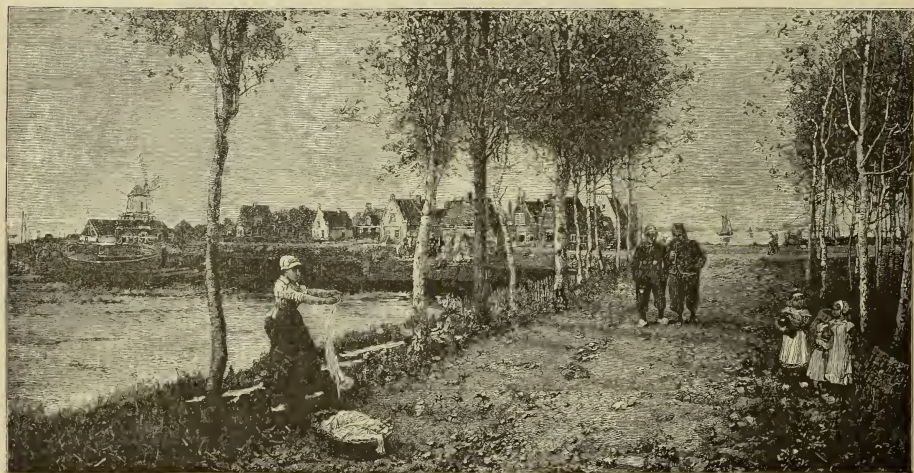
gestive of an art-loving people, and less like great, dull boxes of unlovely brick and mud-pie stucco. Havard, who has written so much and so well of the Netherlands of to-day, always has a kindly word for the new style of architecture he saw creeping in in Holland; he always speaks of the "*délicieuses maisonnettes, riantes, coquettes, pimpantes*," etc., perhaps because they remind him of a French provincial town; but, as every one is not so enamoured of that kind of thing as he is, one does not always quite agree with him. However, the "maisonnettes" are increasing in such numbers, and the iconoclastic spirit is so ruthless among the Dutch, that, if one cares to see the few relics of past architecture still remaining, he had better be quick about it, as they are fast disappearing.

CHAPTER VIII.

ZWOLLE.

AS we had heard much of the town of Zwolle and its many things of interest, we next turned our steps in that direction, innocently passing by places far better for us, as it afterwards turned out—Hindeloopen, Stavoren, and the island of Urk. One generally is obliged to go to a country two or three times in order to know exactly where the places are that he wishes to see. We were told that, if we missed all else, we should see Zwolle, but no one mentioned Kampen, near by, and much better, as we knew later. Of course, if one's time has a given limit, only a certain number of places can be seen, and if the vaunted towns fall flat, and the good but unheard-of places are ignorantly passed aside, experience and time only can teach one better, and we only knew better when too late. The ride from Leeuwarden to Zwolle is not a very cheering thing by rail. The country traversed is, for the most part, a desolate stretch of low, swampy bog; it is not exactly a waste, as they dig peat and turf there. There are endless plantations of stunted pines and dwarf beech and puny birch, and fringes of sickly willow and trembling little aspens, trenches filled with rich, black, stagnant water, showing beneath the green slime upon it, here and there, rich black or brown earth, with a thin sprinkling of sand dusted upon it. When a way-side station occurred, however, even on this plain, it turned out to be a good, well-kept place. The roads leading to and from it

would be high and broad and solid. They were, in fact, the dikes between the miles of soppy plantations. The wood and peat farmers lived back upon these roads, on higher grounds, and were rich and prosperous, like most people in Friesland. At the stations were great piles of peat and fagots, and vans full of the fatness of the back lands. There was nothing unusual to note at these wayside stopping-places, in the way of costume or character; everything was serious and well-to-do and uninteresting. We had plenty of time for study, as we stopped at every little place, and there we would wait, and back and shunt and change, and toot horns and let off steam, and dawdle, as if we were merely trying to kill time. It was nearly nightfall as we ran into Zwolle, the swamps and ditches and desolation following us to the very gates. One moment the world seemed a weedy, frog-haunted waste, and the very next we ran into the bustle of a gas-lighted station, thankful for the transition. The omnibus soon clattered us over the stone-paved streets, past a shadowy, towering "groote kerke," and landed us at a very old



ONE OF THE DEAD CITIES.



SKETCH AT ZWOLLE.

inn, that seemed suffering the first pangs of being galvanized back to life and modernity. I wish they would let the outer shell alone, and only modernize some of the adjuncts of civilization within a little more. Just as the hardy traveller fared two hundred years ago, so do you fare to-day at certain old inns—the joys, the comforts, the disagreeables, are just about the same. The only thing almost universally added is a billiard-table in the dining-room. Travellers are fewer than in the prosperous old days, and the well-to-do retired merchants come in to smoke and play. The commercial voyager likes to smoke and play. The diners are fewer and fewer, and, when they come, they take a side-table, and the smoke of many pipes and cigars. They must take the chance of the butt of a cue helping down the “bite or sup,” and when the long-legged man leans far across the table, and counterpoises the action by a backward stretch of boot-heel, then must the diners also have a certain care against tilting the head to meet it as they lean back to drain the goblet. As the alcoved bed in our large oak-panelled room was a mere detail not to be observed, we had our dinner to ourselves, and then sallied forth into the streets. We walked round the silent, shadowy old church, peering into a few of the little open shops about the square. There were here and there a few bits of “curios” left behind by the sharp Amsterdam dealer, almost, but not quite, good enough to want—mostly patched and mended things, and others past mending: good little figures, but without heads or hands or feet, good little cups with a piece out, and the saucer a mismatch, good little vases without covers, and little covers without vases, and dull marks of cement painted over to hide breaks and getting yellow and showing worse than before. “Five florins only; if it had not this or that, it would be fifty.” Nothing to buy, and unwasted cash “burning holes in our pockets.” Why is it that people *will* buy

things abroad that they would not look at in London, and then go dragging them about the Continent with minds absorbed in their preservation?

The principal street of Zwolle was a large, well-lighted, wide thoroughfare, with plate-glass-windowed shops, and there, too, the goldsmith and the sweetmeat shops flourished apace. And there, too, was the solution of a certain mystery—"What becomes of all the veneered furniture and the arsenic wall-papers with wreaths of cabbage-roses, and the rugs with chromy landscapes, and life-sized poodles? Who were now buying the scrolly chiffoniers and the green rep parlor suites? Here they were in piles. The artistic craze had not affected Zwolle. Not a single hint of Morris, or Minton, or Eastlake on any single thing in sight. The sale of mirrors with curly gold frames seemed to be enormous. Chromos were everywhere. Crowds were about shop windows, looking at chromos and colored photographs; crowds were walking in the middle of the roadway—merry and well-tempered—no male creature without a pipe or cigar; but we saw no interesting costumes.

The next day we went to see the old church. We found it very vast and whited and dampish. There were some good old pews, and a rather fine pulpit. We were shown the room in which the marriage ceremonies are conducted—a very fine old room indeed, with furniture of the early part of the last century. We were then taken to the crypt to see some carved stonework, but we found something else, of more interest to us. There had the *koster* established a sort of furnace-room, where he dispensed glowing peat charcoal to put in the little foot-warmers still used by all womenkind in Dutch churches.

"How much do you put in for a penny?"

"Sometimes, if the sermon is going to be long, we give

good measure, but if it is a short sermon we only give just enough to last." (The old boy spoke English.)

Hearing of a museum of antiquities, we soon found our way to it; but not so easily to the keeper. The old lady had to be sent for far and wide. She evidently had very few vis-



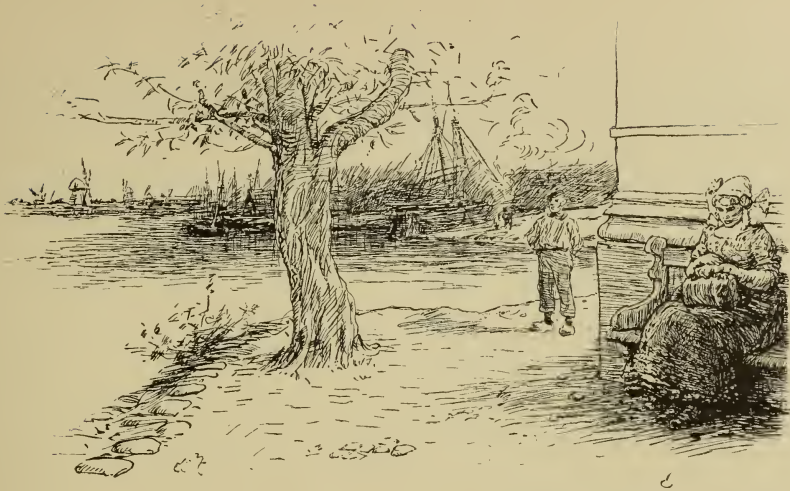
THE OLD KOSTER.

itors, and seemed lost in wonder that she had us. The place was painfully clean; the walls were as ghastly as whitewash could make them, and the boards seemed wasting away under constant scrubbing; but, oh, the long-pent-up agony of imprisoned smells that wafted by as the creaky doors opened! Wearying stuffiness that was almost enough to embalm the vis-

itor if it was inhaled long enough. The arsenic seemed to radiate from the mangy, stuffed wildcats and other beasts, and "wildcat" whiskey seemed to ooze from the bottled vipers and scorpions. I need not say that we piloted that old lady at a lively pace past those fearsome things, holding our breath meanwhile. Then, reaching an upper room where there was nothing more deadly than South Sea Island war implements and dresses, we asked for the antiquities. They turned out to be the usual spear-heads of flint, and fragments of Roman pottery, and crumbling bronze daggers, and ornaments going to dust. These were the proceeds of local diggings, and locally interesting, merely. Then there was a large, weird, rambling instrument of savage music (Borneo, or thereabouts); it was made of bamboo and straw, and when one thumped on it vigorously enough with a large club it gave forth sounds to soothe the untutored breast, but to the ordinary ear it was enough to induce a return to savagery. The old lady was willing to oblige us with a fugue on it; but, oh, that embalming smell! A few minutes more and all would have been over with us: a couple of lumps of camphor and a neat glass case, a couple of tickets in Frisian and German, and we should have been added to that collection. We led the way out while consciousness still remained.

"This smells something like a dead city, Jacob, just about here." When we were a safe distance from the museum, so that we had courage to sniff, we said this.

"Oh, no," said that worthy, seriously. "Dose 'dead city,' she is very nice. You will *like* dose city; bot you got to go on de odder zide of de Zuider Zee. You must go back to Amsterdam, and take de Noord Holland Canal. Of course you *can* cross, but dere is no boat; and it dakes longer," etc.



WAITING FOR THE FERRY-BOAT.

“Take us away, then ; these places are too good and flourishing for the simple likes of us.”

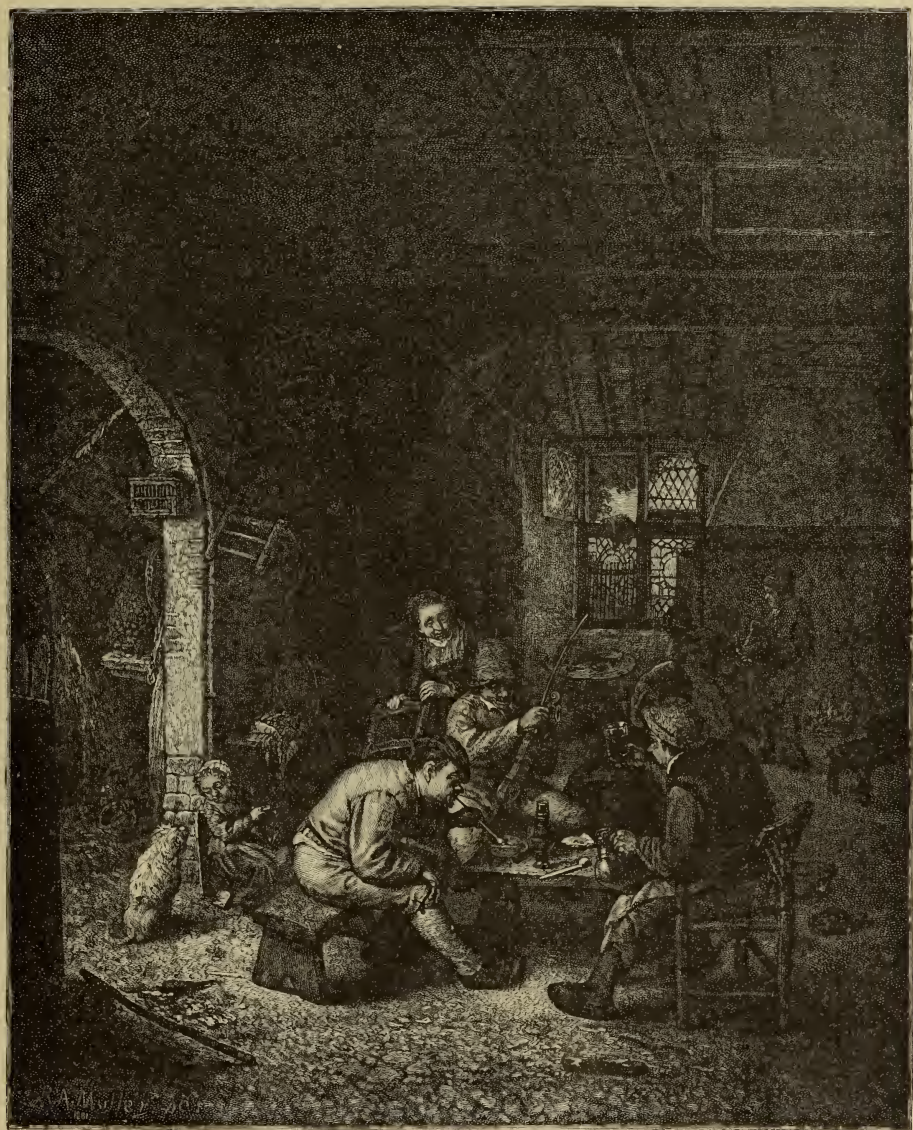
The fact is, we had been spoiled for this land of propriety and plenty by our previous revel in the glowing quaintness of the Isle of Marken.

CHAPTER IX.

NORTHWARD BY CANAL.

IT was a cool, hazy, glistening October morning as we steamed out of the dock at Amsterdam on board one of the boats that ply along the North Holland Canal. We could have gone much more rapidly by rail to our destination—Alkmaar—but the canal promised to be far more picturesque and amusing. In fact, it was seriously mooted at one moment that we should go on one of the slowly crawling little *trekschuyts*, or passenger canal-boats, so as to see the country and the people more at our leisure; but this self-sacrifice was carefully damped by the Faithful One finding that the *treks* did not run very regularly, and that, when they did, few people went on them, and, furthermore, that if we wished to crawl and “loafe and invite our soul,” and be fully miserable, we should try the “diligence”—not the archaic vehicle of old postilion days, but a sordid, modern rattletrap of an omnibus. Nay, then, but the steamer was the judicious middle course, and a very nice, comfortable little boat it was.

When we finally got through the various locks and impediments into the canal itself, we soon saw that the artistic promise of the land would need much careful looking after if one would have a moderate fulfilment thereof. It is but fair to say that the canal was evidently never intended to charm or amuse to any intense degree, but to be simple and solid and direct. It is no small, mean runnel of a waterway, but a goodly wide and deep



AN OSTADE NOT TO BE FORGOTTEN.

thing that a ship can get about in comfortably. If one must come down to figures, I will venture to say that I fancy it is some hundred and odd miles in length. Sufficient for the day, however, was the fact that it would take us to Alkmaar, and that along its rush-fringed banks were pictures passing ever before us, of trim, sleepy villages and skirts of towns, fat farmsteads, juicy pastures, sleek cows, and rosy-cheeked milkmaids, with sleeves rolled above elbow—so tightly that the lusty arm below would be more than rosy, it would be a dappled carnation. There were the teeming polders and the jaunty windmills, in rich profusion and variety, and all the familiar objects of a pleasant Dutch landscape. On the forward deck of the boat was a goodly pile of market-baskets and boxes, and, mounting to the top of the heap, we selected a soft basket—first making sure that it didn't contain eggs—as a point of vantage and a sketching-seat, and then we remarked to the panorama before us, as Byron did to the ocean, that it might “roll on.” Not that we felt unduly flippant or heedless—the occasion was too serious for that.

We were singularly blessed with just the right kind of good weather to see Holland by. If it had rained as it *can* rain there! How curiously adapted were all the lines and objects of this landscape to a series of pictures of utter and abject misery! We soon remarked the great difference between this North Holland side and the other, or Friesland, side of the Zuider Zee. There was here more color and variety, more irregularity of feature, more careless abundance and spontaneity. It was prim and speckless enough, goodness knows, but it was only in comparison with rectangularly tilled Friesland proper that it seemed recklessly picturesque.

And here, too, was the real, undoubtedly original, Cuyp-like atmosphere. We seemed to be sailing out of one big Cuyp

straight into another, passing a bit of Brouwer or Teniers now and again, where the shady gardens of the little village ale-houses came down to the water's edge. Surely Cuyp must have gone often here for his sleek, rosy cows, his sedgy meadows, and his sun-drowned air. There is the same milkmaid, with the same white close cap, the same collar and jacket and gown, I'll be sworn.

"They do not die, nor change to us, although they change." The merry, liquid-eyed toss-cup of Ostade and Teniers, with his tall beaker and his portly grès-de-Flandre jug, his small-bowled, thick-stemmed little pipe, his crimson *beret* with its cock's feather—where is he? Alas! changed for a modern non-descript that might almost be Flemish or French, or from some little, vague Netherlandish settlement—anywhere. He generally wears, in emulation of his French fellow-workman, a kind of regulation head-gear, a fearfully tall silk cap of this sort of build when new, but when it gets older and has been through a few disputes, as well as through wind and wet, it takes more varieties of fantastic, disreputable, and abandoned shapes than any cap I ever



saw. Not that

I wish to overabuse it. It may become "classic" some day.



One generally, however, associates a pipe and a

Dutchman together; in fact, it is difficult to think of one without immediately thinking of the other. And it is a sad wrench to one's feelings to find the pipe put out, and the cigar—and in a perky cigar-tube, too, generally—flourishing in its stead. It is not always the Ostade-like skittle-garden that one sees down by the water's edge. I grieve to say that the bad imitation of a little



provincial French café, with its wiry little chairs and its cockety little iron tables, and its poisonous-looking bottles of absinthe and vermouth, are far too frequent. I would not swear that we saw more than one such café the whole way, but even that was too much. The farther north one goes in Holland the more one's attention is called to the rapid increase of swirling ornament as a feature of domestic and civic architecture. Even on the better class of farm-houses, and more notably on the more pretentious country villas skirting the canal, the gables are fashioned in most fantastic shapes of curve and scroll, and the general impression of riotous lines meandering about them is further enhanced by startling effects of painting and gilding. We touched at a few of the little docks and landing-places along the waterway, and noted many delightfully quaint bits of color, as well as lots of amusing characters and incidents, backgrounds of cottages rich with downy, velvet-surfaced tiles and mottled brick, splashed with moss and stain and lichen, taking every tint that a fat, humid air knows so well how to paint—if it has plenty of time. The window-frames would be a dazzling white, the curtains of spotless dimity, the shutters and doors of brilliant green, the cow-sheds and outhouses shiny with black pitch, and often the trees would have about six feet of the lower trunk painted a cheap sort of "forget-me-not" blue. Lots of flowers, plenty of flaxen-haired children and blue-eyed girls, lots of ducks and geese, and any number of cats.

Oh, it is not at all an unamusing journey or a weary one, to the simple-minded wayfaring sketcher who can manage to forget now and then to yearn for Botticelli and the Infinite. We noticed the prevalence of female labor in a "long-shore" sort of way about the various landings. It would be a strapping, rosy dame, with sleeves well tucked up, who would deftly catch the hawser, and bandy lively compliments with the deck

hands of the steamer. They handled the lighter freight to and fro, kicking about the tubs of butter, and "shying" the bounding bullets of elastic Dutch cheese in fine, manly style. They gave themselves curious "sea-dog" kind of airs, too, that lent them a certain charm of their own. I should never think of recommending any young lady to study their little ways in order to shine in refined circles, but, at the same time, any young lady art student of the right stuff and fibre might do worse than possess her soul and her sketch-book of a few of the unconscious and striking poses that these female athletes surprise one with. Sometimes they are uncommonly statuesque in play of line and movement.

"Why didn't we do it?" Well, for one thing, the boat had to get us on to Alkmaar, and did not wait long enough except for us to see and admire. I would not fix on a bustling, jiggity steamer as the best place in the world to sketch quietly, although, if you sit perched upon the taffrail, the enterprising looker-on and loafer is pretty well counted out; he cannot breathe in your ear without the risk of getting overboard. You have a chance of this yourself; the position, besides, is strikingly unbecoming, especially for a lady artist. No matter how enthusiastic she may be in pursuit of her art, she *must* be a sacrifice to the graces if she sits on the outer edge of the rail. All things considered, it was a very amusing run that day along the canal to Alkmaar, and we were even somewhat sorry when we came to its picturesque old landing-place.

CHAPTER X.

ALKMAAR.

“A NICE rambling old hostelry is what we want, Jacob, with courtyard and fountain, with oaken stairways, and all sorts of excitements in the way of interlaced brickwork and stone carvings, with mullioned windows and stained glass, if possible, or, at least, a crow-step gable, red-tiled roof, and a gold weathercock. Do you know of such a place?”

Jacob was seldom at a loss: if he did not know, he would try to lay hold of some one to tell him. “I will hass dis bor-ter; he will know if such a ’otel is bossible.”

And he had a long confabulation with a dazed-looking old man, who seemed to get more dazed still as Jacob tried a free sort of translation on him. Finally they agreed about something.

“Dot is all right now; dese man will schouw de way, and so he might joost so well garry some of de pags.” Simple, ingenuous old boy!

The supplementary guide soon buckled the traps together, and, swinging them over his back, led the way. Jacob could now walk beside us in the undimmed lustre of his diamond pin, and point out all the objects of interest that we were looking at. The inn that we were taken to as our destination did not in the slightest degree come up to our modest requirements. The translation must have been tampered with be-

tween Jacob and the hazy porter. However, it had the negative merit of being so entirely and utterly opposite to the picture we drew in our minds that it came like a surprise. We wanted an ideal hotel, and this was only realistic. It was a shock; but, as it was airy and clean and inviting, we were willingly lured in. There might be certain advantages, after all. Did we not still sadly remember a restless night passed in "hunting the slipper" in just such a romantic old inn as we pictured to Jacob?

Everything here was as brilliantly polished and as frantically scrubbed as if it were a show place in Broek. The beds were rather primitive, not to say quaint. Imagine a large oaken chest, with the lid off, made into a "four-poster" by means of tall, slim uprights at each corner, supporting a canopy and curtains of blue check muslin. It is nice and snug when, after rasping your shins over the edge, you finally do tuck yourself away for the night. It takes much to dismay an old traveller who goes about with a wide experience of all sorts and conditions of beds in all sorts of strange places. What a delightful paper might be written by an old campaigner on the various strange "by-bys" that he has gone to in his time! Smothered in a great affair of feathers and down, with canopy of silken embroideries and pillows edged with Spanish lace—the grand old carven bed of state. Once or twice in one's life is enough for that luxury, with its semi-asphyxiation. The bed of sweet hay or straw at a wayside mountain hut is a more pleasant memory. A bed of fragrant pine-boughs or ferns, in a forest shanty, or, for want of the shanty sometimes, *sous les belles étoiles*, on a summer night, is not so bad a thing. A billiard-table in an overcrowded hotel, even with a railway rug around one, is apt to "slate" the sleeper before morning; and four chairs, with a coat rolled up for a pillow, is a shifty

and unsteady resting-place; it generally finds you on the floor, either suddenly by accident or deliberately by choice, before morning. Therefore I repeat that this pathetic little snuggery had rather a charm about it. We will return to it anon. It was only early afternoon, and we did not retire to it just then. After a general survey of the little inn, we strolled out to see the town. Now, Alkmaar is anything but a dead city, nor is it on the Zuider Zee. It is a very busy and bustling and cheesy place. In fact, it is the principal market-town for butter and cheese—more especially cheese—in North Holland. I won't venture to say just how many millions they roll out in a year. Jacob *did* say, but we never could get him to observe the nice distinction between so many pounds and so many cheeses. The figures, therefore, would lack interest to the statistical person.

There was to be the weekly market on the morrow, and we should not only have an opportunity of forming some notion of what a large town gorged with cheese looks like, and smells like, but we should see all the picturesqueness of the surrounding country got together in one mass in that fine old Market Square.

Jacob was invaluable for getting us into the thick of every fair and marketing, not to mention an occasional kermesse and other enlivenments. Already, in the various shops and restaurants around the market-place, could be seen preparations for the morrow: barrels of beer were being rolled in, piles of provender, vegetable and animal, were being massed together into a sort of barricade against the coming invasion of hunger and thirst—especially thirst. The fatted calf was being cut up for the behoof of the prodigal peasant—father and son. Jacob the prudent reminded us that it was a good thing for us that our hotel was at a safe distance from the festivities of the mor-

row. "Dese tam farmer what py an' sell de sheese, dey make so much money dey pring deir wife and dorter to py shewelry and eat sweet cookies and candies all day long; dey will eat up all dese stuff"—taking in the surrounding provender with one comprehensive wave of the hand—"yes, and more as dis too. But never you mind, we are all zafe where we are; dey won't go dere." We breathed more freely, and proceeded to get a realizing sense of the quaint old Market Square about us. The sacred temple of the place is the great weighing-house for the cheese and butter, built in the liberal and florid time of the early sixteenth century; it testifies amply to the flourishing state of the cheese industry at Alkmaar during that prosperous period. The very architecture of the building is the most fat and riotous in the way of scrolls and figures and carved tablets that one could well find even in North Holland. The old houses around the "Scale-house" were mostly of the same period, and all more or less elaborate in varied brickwork and stone carvings. The old shops seemed to have the same way of displaying their wares that they had in the Middle Ages.

We were especially attracted by a cake-baker's shop-front (not in the square, but just out of it, down by the canal). We were not drawn by the toothsome-ness of the gorgeous array of baked "imagery" in gingerbread—for it gave one a pain in the maxillary regions to look at them—but by the curious archaic designs of these survivals of *koek*-bakers' art of two or three hundred years ago. Great effigies in every shade of golden brown, in every *genre* of the art; historical portraits, animal, domestic, and marine subjects—there they were in great piles; but in every instance the art stopped short, not "in the cultivated court of the Empress Josephine," but much earlier. The moulds must have cost a goodly sum to cut in their time, and,

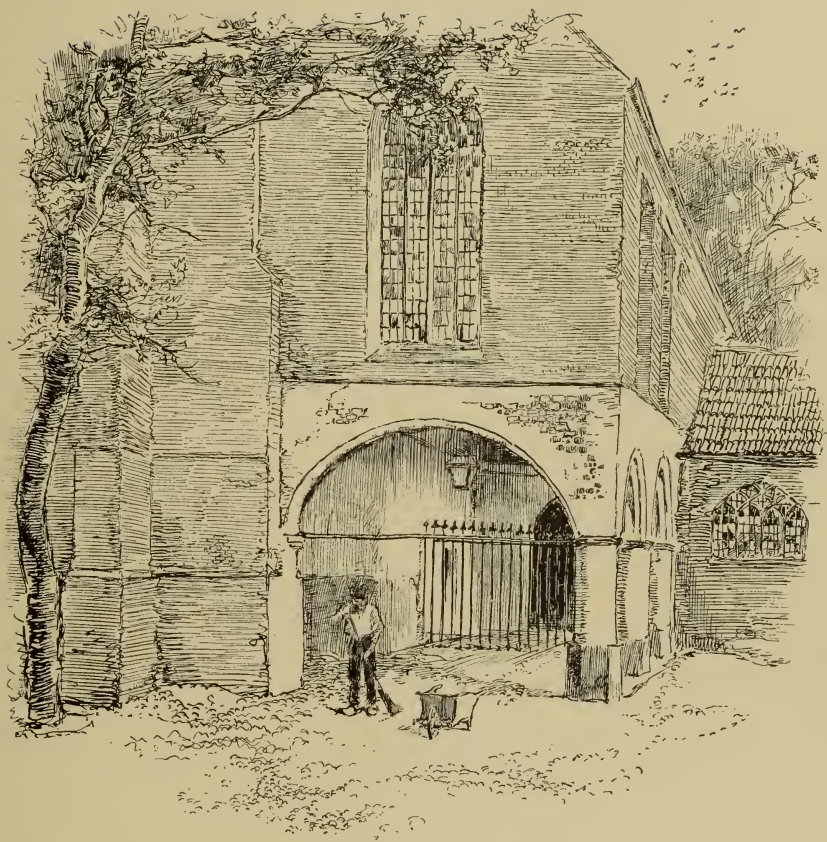
when once done, the baker's art, for economy's sake, became strictly conservative and conventional. All the little cakey men wore doublet and hose, and broad cap and feather, all the little women were in ruff and farthingale and high-heeled shoon, and all so correct that one might collect them as authorities on costume. Some of the very large and archaic cakes looked uncommonly like old "brasses" from some cathedral floor, so severe and so correct in detail were they. And then the ships! great three-deckers, like those of the Spanish Armada. The horse was the many-curved prancer of the breed peculiar to the heroic monument. Of course, we were not permitted to carry on our archaic investigations in peace outside the baker's window. Jacob lent his allurements to those of the rosy, buxom baker's daughter, and we soon found ourselves investing in a colossal effigy of the Prince of Orange, a four-decked war ship, and a good-sized Roman steed. These we gave to Jacob to carry for us carefully. They were not wrapped up at all, and as we passed through the crowded market-place we soon became the centre of idle observation and irrelevant remark. Poor old Jacob was at once the sport of the ruthless *gamin*, and the mock of the merry-hearted sailor.

As we neared a more secluded spot he ruefully remarked: "Now, don't you t'ink we might eat some of dese ship, or some horse, maybe? Dese tam poy, dey 'give one no beace."

"All right, Jacob. Give us a leg or a tail of the beast, and help yourself to the mainsail of the ship, unless you think it better to wait until we get to the hotel; then we can divide fairly all round. Those very pretty chambermaids would like some, perhaps."

There would have been little left of the effigies if Jacob had not got a newspaper to conceal them from the passing boy; and, as it was, he had so embossed himself with sticky

frigate and charger on various parts of his clothing that he had to be scraped down by the sympathetic chambermaids when we returned to the inn. I don't remember the exact fate of the archaic gingerbread. We never saw it again. The Faithful One and several of the inn servants looked rather poorly the next day. I only know that Jacob never bothered us to buy any more effigies. In the evening we went to a quaint, little, old tavern in the market-place—a hostelry much frequented by the cheese-dealers. It was here, over or after their bargains, that much lubricating fluid in the way of schnapps and beer passed across the little polished tables. Around the room were a lot of little cupboards, each numbered, and with its lock and key. Jacob got permission to open one of these. "Here you are! You see dese t'ings. Every one of dose cheese farmer has got his own glass, his own bipe, his own tobacco, and dese is his bottle; and every dime he make his goot bizness dey come in here, and *den*—" Jacob's eye twinkled a suggestion of plenteous libation. "Oh, I assure you, dey is sblendid fellows, macknificend fellows, what zell de cheese here! You see dose fellow do-morrow." We, in a roundabout sort of a way, asked each other if there might not haply be some more refined and elevated manner of seeing Alkmaar—something higher than gingerbread and cheese to seek out, in fact. There was a museum, but we fought shy of such delights after the arsenical air of the one at Zwolle. There was a town-hall, with dusty archives, but we did not read ancient Dutch with fluency. There was a fine old church. We would go to the old church in the morning, so as to save our æsthetic consciences. For the rest, we were enjoying the color and life and quaintness and even the fatness of the capital of Cheeseland. There is a curious chapter about Alkmaar in D'Amici's book on Holland. D'Amici is an Italian traveller, who goes about with deadly



CHURCH PORCH IN ALKMAAR.

serious motives in the way of facts and figures, and all he has to record of this place is the fact that he arrived during the wildest powwow of the "kermesse;" and not being able to speak a word of Dutch, or make the people about him understand Italian or French, he had a most tremendous difficulty to find his way to a hotel, or to get a room when he arrived there. Not being able to command a dinner or to hear himself think, let alone speak, for the pandemonium of the fair, he resolved to beat a retreat. He could not make this wish understood either, although he hit upon the happy device of imitating a railway train, thinking that this would at once appeal to the most obscure intelligence, and be the means of taking him back to the station. They only thought him some escaped lunatic. He finally seized his travelling-bag and fled from the hotel, and somehow managed to find his way to the train. It was very droll; but, after all, for a serious collector of facts and figures, it was a curiously incomplete sketch of Alkmaar. He bitterly blamed the untutored minds of this remote spot for not knowing languages, or, at least, decent pantomime. He came by boat, and wanted to go back by train. Now, given that to convey as a light pantomimic exercise, I don't call it easy, or the people stupid who do not catch it the first time (in real life). I have seen a scanty-skirted maiden in a ballet come tripping in, and then point one toe slowly and solemnly to heaven, rocking her smiling face on clasped hands to express hunger and fatigue. She was at once understood by those about her, for on that desert isle they produced a neatly spread table loaded down with pasteboard delicacies and tinselled goblets. But that was the ideal. The poor Italian wanderer had to face a sad problem in realism.

We, fortunately, had no such pantomimic problems to face. We had only to wait for the morrow and market-day. The

fun was in full force when we reached the scene of action next morning. The very air seemed teeming with cheeses. They looked like great golden apples, or, rather, like something between a very large apple and a small pumpkin. They are very elastic and slippery too, when new, and these were all very new, and evidently suffering from nervous excitement, judging from the state of "quiver" they all seemed to be in. The market-place was filled with great, high wagon-loads of them, and frantic peasants tossing them down to the porters, who were "shying" them madly about here and there, to and fro, until it looked like some insane jugglery practice. It was no joke to walk calmly about during these manœuvres; there was a tolerable chance of a stray shot with one of these balls of concentrated indigestion. Fatal error to try and dodge them. Sure to be hit. Keep your course, and the pitchers and tossers allow for you and a rational amount of headway. But, of course, they cannot allow for eccentric dodging. There is much demented shouting, and a seemingly absurd amount of hand-shaking. This is apt to mislead the stranger. It is no merely sentimental meeting or parting, but the usual cementing grasp of a final bargain. Then the cheeses go merrily by, piled high on hand-barrows, to the great weigh-house, to be scaled. The porters are a race apart. It is no small job to carry about three or four hundred-weight of dodgy and elusive balls, piled up on a hand-barrow, without spilling them. The porters have a curious, scuffling, shambling way of gliding over the ground. The arms are outspread, partly for balance, partly to ward off colliders. Every scale in the weigh-house is painted some distinguishing color, or arrangement of colors, and each set of porters has painted hats and badges of the corresponding tint; and as there are many scales, so does it come to pass that the whole scene looks like a wild revel of all the most positive and crude colors out

of the rainbow. The barrow is slung across the shoulders by straps, and, as they do not touch their hands to it to steady it, the slightest concussion is enough to bring down the slippery pyramid with a run.

We saw a small and heedless boy manage to run full tilt against a pair of these carriers, and every golden sphere of bounding cheese went flying to the four winds. The unhappy urchin was not cuffed nor even vilified, nor did they speak unkindly of his parents; the crowd simply paused in mad career, and set to work to pursue and bring back the fugitives, and no one seemed to think himself or herself too busy or too grand to lend an obliging hand to restore them, or even the obliging apron or coat sleeve to polish off the dust from the grimed surface before they helped to pile them back on the barrow. The unlucky boy seemed to be rather sympathized with, and even to be looked upon as a mild sort of martyr. I was surprised that nobody kissed him. We noticed that children are invariably "made much of" in the way of kindly and indulgent treatment all over Holland. When we found the cheese carnival rather pall upon us, we sought other scenes, but it was difficult to get entirely away from it; something would turn up to show how deep and wide its interests were in Alkmaar. Along the quays were numbers of vessels loading with all sorts of it, to all parts of the globe, wherever the least scrap of digestion remains intact. The quaint old warehouses along the docks had nearly all stone tablets, showing that for two hundred years or so they had identified themselves with this one industry. From the upper stories of these cheeseries were long wooden gutters leading to the ships in dock, and along these troughs trickled a never-ceasing rill of the ripened and matured article, now a brilliant crimson—the final tint it comes to when ready for the far-off dyspeptic. There are many things worthy of interest in

Alkmaar in the way of old buildings. Some of the well-preserved old shops of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are well worth seeing. The town-hall is good from the outside—we did not go in. The “Groote Kirke” is an immense thing, showing what a considerable place Alkmaar must have been a few hundred years ago. It was sadly silent and whitewashed and fusty the day we saw it. There is always a smell of soapsuds and damp pipe-clay about Dutch churches. They evidently believe thoroughly in the precept that “cleanliness is next to godliness.”



JETSAM.

CHAPTER XI.

HOORN AND EDAM.

THERE was much to see and enjoy still remaining, but we were anxious to push on to Hoorn, to see what a really dead city might be like. So we decided to drive at our "ain gait" the few miles between the two towns. We preferred always to drive if we could manage it, as in that way we could more thoroughly see the country. Many enterprising souls, with lots of time to spare, would have walked, or bicycled, or canoed, or have "trekked," but we were much more simple in our tastes; besides, we found it the best thing to do.

The landlord of the Alkmaar hotel was rather sportive in his tastes, and when we made application for a "trap" of the usual funereal sort, he stated, to our great delight, that he was going to drive us over himself to Hoorn, behind his own personal "steppers." There is a good bit of latent horsiness in the Dutch character. They have a certain species of racing which they designate by the suggestive term of "hard-driverij" (the final *j* is pronounced between *i* and *y*, somehow making it very fair English). We did not see any of the races, but if those horses of which we had experience were supposed to be very fast, I must say that racing is still in a primitive stage of development in the Low Countries. But he was a fine good fellow, the host, and as we bowled merrily along the well-paved road, passing all the lumbering market-carts, and even the sprucer kind of farmers' wagons — generally filled with the

gayly attired womenkind going home all the richer and jollier from the market—there was plenty of flying shot of banter and rich badinage between our popular landlord and his country friends.

The road itself was interesting enough. There was the usual fringe of plane and poplar trees on either side, the well-kept farms, the prim little villages—some of them, lying down below in rich polders, being of more modern date, and looking as if the whole community had agreed to build them at once and for all time, and be done with it—model villages, in fact, from the toy-box little church to the toy-box little pig-sty, all turned out of the same mill. The trees about the farmsteads were mostly blue-washed up the trunk to where the branches began. This was partly to relieve the Dutch craving to “decorate” right and left, and partly to preserve the tree, in some way, from its enemies. This lively road was still more enlivened on this day by the constant coming and going of the picturesque market-people and their gayly painted and gilded carts. The costume, too, is full of color and quaintness of fashion. There is a good deal of gold-plate about the head-gear of the women. Some of the very well-to-do wear the finest Brussels lace in their cap-trimmings, and often the blade of gold that half hides the brow is thickly studded with diamonds. Diamond ear-rings, too, often flash and career in the sunlight as they drive by. These, with gayly-patterned shawls and ribbons, and the rich, fresh complexions of the buxom wearers, make much play of amusing form and color. When we finally reached Hoorn it was still early afternoon, and, to our partial disappointment, there was a sort of market-day going on there, and the place seemed to get livelier and brighter and noisier as we proceeded. Confound this scene of unhallowed festivity! Are we *never* to get to a mouldering and grass-grown city?

The old Doelan Inn to which we drove was the very ideal place that we wished to go to at Alkmaar. We had forgotten to wish for or expect it again, and here it came on us unawares. The inn-yard had been a spacious garden in olden days, with great gates leading down to the water. The lovely old brick walls must have cost a fortune to build in their day. There was the iron date upon the gable of the house, 1646, and all about, on tablets over gate and door ways, were the city arms—the hunter's horn, supported by heraldic animals, deer or cows, one could not determine which, they had been so knocked about. The inn-yard was crowded with the high-backed farmers' chariots, carven and painted, also the humble market-cart, with loads of pigs and geese, dead and alive, mostly the latter, and "concertizing" horribly. We were fascinated with the more elaborate vehicles. They were a weird survival of the sumptuous past, the age of pure rococo. The panels were decorated with every variety of design—landscape, flowers, and fruit, with here and there creatures that looked like the

"Pigs, bulls, and panthers, and other enchanthers,
That graced the pavilion in swate Pimlico."

The house, or, rather, mansion, had evidently been something better than an inn when it was first built. There were wide stairways of oak, carved oak hand-rails, panelled wainscots and elaborate ceilings, and brass sconces and lanterns and brackets, that shone like gold. The oaken doors were polished like ebony and black with age. Down in the smaller of the parlors we ordered our "five-o'clock tea." It was worth while to have it, just to see how quaintly and perfectly they did it. It was like some pious rite. The fresh, pink-looking hostess was having her own personal tea at her own little table, and everything was a picture of cosiness. A fine, healthy young maid-servant was polishing a small round table with all her concentrated

heart and soul. Good! We should now see how it was done. To begin with, it was a fine old mahogany top, and it was even then glowing with that deep, rich radiance that only rewards patient years of elbow-grease. She had a peculiarly aggressive caress with that chamois leather, that seemed to make the top sing again. The good landlady beamed upon this labor of love encouragingly, but finally she remonstrated:

"My dear girl, there, that will do! No, but, really, do leave off!"

She was loath to give it up, but soon our tea battery came in, and she was forced to surrender the table for our use. The first instruments of the aforesaid battery looked like preparations for scrubbing the floor. A large brass-bound copper pail contained a brazier filled with glowing peat charcoal, and on this the most glowing of golden-looking kettles. The tea-sets are now and then of goodish old blue-and-white, and the herb itself is of that kind that Holland rather prides itself on. This, with a kindly sense of welcome, even from the great, purring, friendly cats, made the five o'clock hour pass very pleasantly. There was a nice long prowl of investigation in prospect, so we did not dally long, but soon put the worthy Jacob in motion townward.

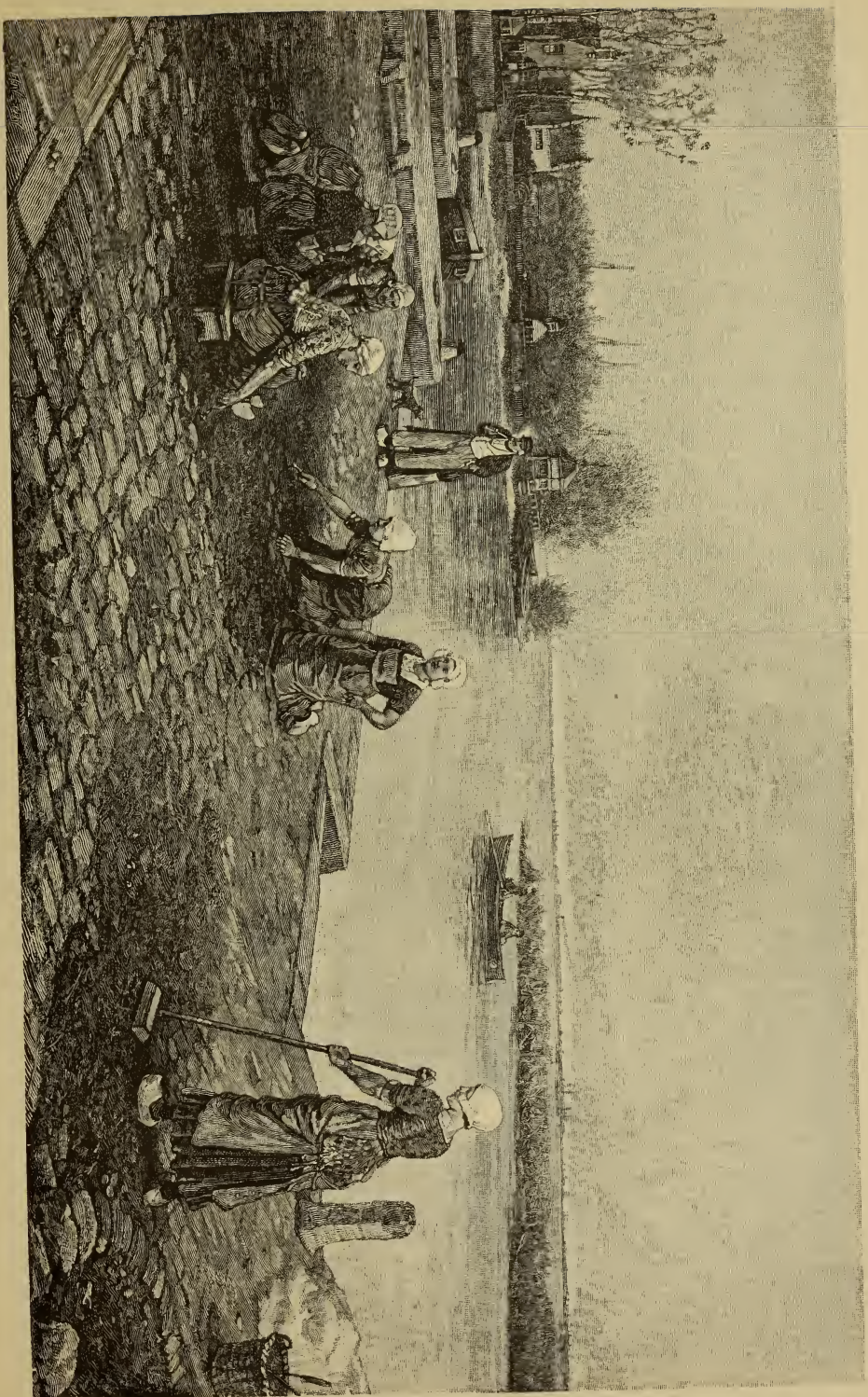
"Dere is not much to zee here; dey 'ave joost puild demselves a new parrack, where de sodgers live. Will you see dot? No? Well, we will go and zee de old town-gates, de water-gate, and de shops."

Hoorn is simply a jewel of a place. It seems to have grown old and poor in a calm and dignified way. It was still prim and starched and scrupulously clean, like some little, immaculate, white-haired old lady, to whom Fortune has played the runaway. There are many well-kept vestiges of her former stateliness piously preserved. There is no rack along with the ruin; no

grim despair with the change of luck. They don't let the grass grow in the streets so long as they can prevent it. If you stroll out in some of the less-frequented parts in early morning, you will see a bevy of women, young and old, sitting on little, low stools, or kneeling on folded sacks, picking out the grass and herbage from between the stones of the street and quays. It is all so orderly, and they look so neat and prim, that their efforts look more like eccentric and misdirected amateur gardening than anything else. There is no doubt that, at one time, Hoorn was a wealthy and thriving city, with powerful guilds of merchant adventurers, to send its active fleets all the world over. This was the home of the Dutch captain (Wouter Cornelisz Schouten) who first rounded that very draughty promontory, Cape Horn. *He* called it Hoorn, after his native town, and more people have called it evil names since than have spoken uncivil things of its quiet, sleepy old godmother. It was also out of this now weedy harbor that the valiant little fleet sailed to face the mighty, haughty Spanish war-ships under the terrible Admiral Count Bossu, so cocksure of carrying all before him if he once got into the Zuider Zee. The little, now half-forgotten, ports of Hoorn, Enkhuysen, and Monnickendam, however, soon sent such a swarm of waspish fire-ships and gunboats about the Spanish admiral's ears that, by nightfall, he would have given something very handsome if he had *not* found out that snug back way into the Zuider Zee trap. The three towns divided the honors and spoils of the victory. Hoorn has his gold cup, Monnickendam boasts of his dagger, and at Enkhuysen his sword is preserved with pious care.

Since those palmy days of war, and the more paying victories of commerce, there is no doubt that Hoorn has sorely felt the buffets of changing fortune. It has known the bitterness of seeing its commerce diverted to new channels; it has seen

Amsterdam and Rotterdam fatten on its lost substance; it has watched its lonely neighboring rivals dwindle with itself, until all feelings of rivalry were changed to sympathy and fellowship in a common misfortune. Still, after many long, dull years of partial paralysis, life is again stirring in its veins. Even within a few years there is a marked revival of trade and cheerfulness. The great East Indiaman can no longer get over the silted-up harbor bar, and it would have no need to, if it could; but the fussy little steamers of the Zuider Zee run in and out freely, and take away much fat of the rich land still flourishing thereabout. Flocks of sheep, mountains of butter and cheese, droves of plump cattle, still go from Hoorn to the ever-hungry ends of the earth. You will see many fine old houses untenanted, and going to silent, respectable decay. The placards, informing the heedless that they are to sell or let, are long since mouldy with antiquity. So do you see, here and there, a once fine mansion now gone to some base use—the storing of coals or plaster or manure; but such things will happen in thriving places like Dort and Haarlem. There are one or two of the old city gates still standing, and they are more proud and protectful of them than in most Dutch towns. The old city walls have long since been levelled, and many of the canals filled in. It may be sad, but the place is, no doubt, the sweeter and cleaner for it. There are many old houses to interest the architect, and delight the eye of the mere sketcher of the picturesque. That is about all. The vague, excitement-seeking person would perish of ennui very shortly in any of the Dutch “dead cities.” We made many sketches about our inn, which was a very mine of wealth to us, besides being very comfortable and home-like. The inn-yard alone would keep one’s pencil busy for a week, and then there would still be lots to do among the ever coming and going groups of peasant people. There is just the



WEDDING THE STREETS.

same unquenchable interest here as elsewhere in Holland in the doings of the sketcher. We were busy with a drawing of the outer carved gate of the inn-yard, when we soon found ourselves surrounded by an entire school of uniformed boys, teachers and all. Some dozen were overleaping each other to get a sight of our work; Jacob and the ushers were conversing like old cronies, and interchanging snuff. The boys got excited when a bit of drawing pleased them, and they also got critical when it didn't; finally, they got tiresome and unenjoyable. "Jacob, what is this procession which we have interfered with? Is it, perhaps, some idiot asylum out for an airing?"

He considered the question fairly for a moment, with great gravity.

"I don't dink she is, bot I won't pe sure. I will hass." And he did!

They were not in the least degree offended, although Jacob had put the question in his plain, unvarnished way. There was so much repose about the old boy that no one would ever suspect him of sarcasm. It all fell flat. They took infinite pains to tell Jacob all about their school. They were the drawing-class, in fact, and they wanted to "see us do it," and they didn't mind staying with us all the afternoon, so Jacob kindly explained. We protested that it grieved us to interrupt their walk, and pointed out the value of pedestrian exercise to a growing boy, but they would not take a hint. They seemed so much amused at our doing that gateway; they had passed it every day for years, and never thought of doing such a thing.

The attractions of Hoorn kept up their interest for us well enough, but we yearned to see a still more grass-grown town, if possible; this was, if anything, a little too lively. Edam was on our way back, and, best of all, Vollandam—not for its fallen greatness, as it had never been much more than a straggling

fishing-village, but it was said to be another Marken for originality and quaintness; in fact, it lies on the shores of the Zuider Zee, about opposite to that happy isle. We could easily take Edam and Vollandam on our way to Purmerend, where a kermesse was in full "swing," or "blast," in fact, it was both—a great deal of both. If it had not been for the burning desire to see this kermesse we would have gone still farther north before returning to Amsterdam.

Wishing to be entirely independent of any public mode of conveyance, we told Jacob to hire us an open trap of some kind, that would shut up in case of rain. When this affair made its appearance it turned out to be a curious cross between a wagonette and a hearse. In fact, Jacob and the coachman admitted that it could be used for funerals if it were required. There were the usual long-tailed ebony steeds, and rubicund-visaged, watery-eyed driver in solemn black. There was no other conveyance to be had on account of the kermesse, etc. So we were fain to take it; in fact, we were getting rather used to mourning coaches. This one had a sort of canopy, with curtains of oil-skin that would roll up or down, and there was a raised seat for two, behind; around the back rail were rows of sharp nails, to discourage small boys from hanging on in the rear. We took the back seat, and filled in the body of the coach with Jacob and the bags and sketching things, and told him and the coachman to look as cheerful as they could, and off we went. The road was rather lively, with gayly dressed country people going to the fair at Purmerend, or to church at Edam—some were going to both. It was Sunday, and the mixture of holiday-makers and sober, church-going folk was somewhat incongruous. Our own simple but effective turn-out came in for a fair share of good-natured comment—so pointed often that one might think it meant for chaff. Jacob obliged us with a few translations. "Dose gals



Sketching at Idam.

in dem wagon say dot if we don't mek 'aste we won't pe in time for de funeral;" and "dose beoples zay dot we don't zeem zorry as we might; dot you must 'ave loss your moder-in-law!" Jacob and the liquid-eyed driver were quite equal to their chaff, for they gave back a few Rabelaisian repartees that were very effective.

We soon reached Edam, and as we rumbled along its silent streets and closed houses it seemed as if the entire place had gone to church, or to the fair, or "into the silent land." We alighted at a large, rambling hotel, and had our simple luncheon in its banquet-hall (deserted), waited on by a pale, spirituelle ghost of a handmaiden, who looked like one of Ary Scheffer's Madonnas. What an anachronism she seemed, as she came in bearing a smoking dish of cutlets, and, even worse, when she took a jug of foaming beer and sheaf of long pipes to a party of thirsty peasants! A stroll through the town showed many traces of former prosperity, and even a certain amount of civic grandeur. We looked at the market-place, from the fine old bridge, with its broad seats and its much-becurled and twisted iron railing, that spans its wide canal. About the square were numbers of delightful old houses, with elaborately adorned gables, crow-stepped, scrolled, and weathercocked and tableted. Curiously intermassioned were the stone and brick work, mossy and weather-stained enough to drive a colorist mad. I don't exactly mean the kind of colorist who calls himself an "impressionist," as he would probably solve the problem of how to do it by leaving most of the tints out entirely. Now, to leave out the plush-like or fruit-bloom tones of dusty red on brick or tile, or the rich, lush green of moss and stain, or to vary the peculiar tone of painted wood-work, would be to leave out that which is racy of North Holland—its distinguishing mark and *cachet*, to any one who has ever taken note of its local color. I don't wish to cast the smallest

pebble at the "impressionist," by the way. He is a good antidote against the "illusionist," who sees too much, and then adds to it a lot that he does not see. Somewhere in the "golden mean" the two may come together with much mutual advantage.

There is a very good old church of the fifteenth century, brick and stone, with good stained glass; something of the kind of work that one sees in the windows at Delft. The surroundings of the church—the trees and the walls and the pathetic old houses, that look like a lot of poor relations—are worth lingering over. We could not judge of the question of costume, as we scarcely saw a soul except a few melancholy-looking loafers, gaping away the weary hours on the bridge near the square. There was a long row of deserted houses bordering the seldom-stirred waters of the placid canal, their windows long since knocked in, and no one to care. The once well-clipped trees had taken their natural course again, untrimmed to regulation forms. It was autumn, and the great, faded, yellow leaves lay unswept from the mossy pavement; lay thickly, too, on the oozy purple scum of the canal. There is, after a short time, something very filling and satisfying about a very dead old city, on Sunday, when every soul with a spark of life has gone to a neighboring kermesse. Edam has its little history, but, really, it was not then the fitting moment to pry into its past. We simply agreed to "let bygones be bygones," and go on to Vollandam. The drive is a very short one. The high-road is also the dike that keeps back the Zuider Zee from the deep-lying polders hereabout. It was no dead-and-gone place by any means. Not large; one long street, with lowly built but highly tarred and vividly painted fishermen's habitations on either side of the way. The place was fairly swarming with people; being Sunday, the men were all at home, and clad in their Sunday best—dark-blue tight jackets and almost black, very baggy, breeches, gleaming with immense silver



A CORNER IN EDM.



buttons, silver buckles to shoes, gold ear-rings, gold finger-rings, great gold neck-buttons, large silver watch-fobs. It was the most opulent-looking crowd one could well imagine. The men were all dressed after a general type, and the old men the same as the young, except in the shape of head-gear. The small boy was but a miniature of the grown man. They were all as busy as could be, eating small, hard apples, or small, hard nuts. On the wooden platform in front of nearly every house were great baskets of nuts or apples: one could hardly see how trade could go on with profit, as they were all sellers and consumers.

They were evidently impressed by our enormous coach, but far too dignified to show it. We saluted them very gravely and politely, as we went on through the thickly populated street. They, with their silver buttons bristling proudly about them, saluted gravely back, but kept on champing their hard apples. We soon came to a narrow bridge over a small but powerful canal, which our chariot could not pass—the canal was strong enough to have borne an elephant—nor could we turn round, as the dike was too narrow. Just then, as we alighted, came to us a fussy little man, who asked Jacob if we were artists, and would we like to see inside one of the houses? perhaps also we might like to buy some costumes? Bless the man! what else had we come for?—and he to guess our dearest wishes! He led the way to his own house, followed by us and half the entire population. Although we came at a critical moment upon his good vrouw—she was “tubbing” the two babies—she received us kindly. The children howled at first, but soon got reconciled to us, and we to them, innocent of costume as they were. The husband stated our wishes, and out of the great wooden *garderobe* came stores of Sunday-best and every-day attire. Then arose questions of how certain garments were got on or into. Madame would oblige us by showing us then and there—assisted by her

excited husband, with such vigor and zeal that the poor woman was in danger several times of coming unhooked and untied too suddenly for strict decorum. She was obliged to check him at one time with a sounding whack on the ear, much to the delight of the widely grinning and chattering crowd at the doors and windows. We wanted a young man's dress complete, silver buttons and all. In a jiffy his eldest son was sent for, and was disrobed and disbuttoned before he knew what had happened to him. He soon came in with the things neatly done up in a bundle, all ready for us.

During all this time everybody, including the outside crowd, talked and screamed at the tops of their lungs—and they were evidently of leather. It was deafening and hot and exciting, but when it came to settling up—the prices, by the way, were reasonable enough—there seemed to arise a very howl of enthusiasm. The bundles were neatly pinned up in gorgeous cotton handkerchiefs, and when we got outside, and added these startling spots of color to our sketching-gear in the mourning coach, the effect was rather screaming. The problem of turning round had already been solved by unharnessing the horses, and a score of these sturdy, bronzed giants just picking up the old ark and lifting it about as if it had been a child's perambulator. They modestly blushed even when we thanked them for their trouble, and when Jacob proffered some coin to the leading spirit, to stand treat, they almost refused. It was finally accepted, not for drinks, but for apples and nuts all round, and when we drove away—slowly, for fear of running over some of the numerous small-fry—there was infinite waving of kindly farewells from the crowd, some of the small boys following us along the dike cheering until out of breath.

What a *wake-up* the whole thing had been! Even Jacob, on whom defunct cities soon palled, beamed all over. The funeral



AN IDYL.

ark, with all its rainbow-hued bundles, became a painful mystery along the road, until we got to Purmerend, and then we were supposed to be a late arrival, with some additional attractions for the fair. Small boys ran after us the moment we struck the town of booths; others could hardly get off the flying-horses and merry-go-rounds quickly enough to see about this new thing, whatever it was. When we reached the hotel we had some bother about getting rooms, the landlady telling Jacob that she did not entertain performers. An explanation, however, soon mollified the dame, and we were taken in. The kermesse proved to be a very old story. There were the usual monstrosities and entertainments. The people were at that particular moment very languid and unenterprising. It was the last day; they had kept it up for a week, I think, and no wonder they were tired. There was to be a wild orgy at night, however, as a grand finale. But it came on to rain, and, as we did not see much prospect of anything worth going out into the wet for, we stayed at home, and moralized on the wicked and thoughtless ways of the people who could carry on such frivolities, and worse, for a whole week. About midnight we became aware that the kermesse was on, and in full blast. We could hear the strident music of several dancing booths and halls at once. They must needs sing, too, while they dance, and shriek with fiendish, merry laughter, keeping time with much slapping of hands and clatter of thick-soled shoes. As the morning wore on the revels seemed to intensify; they got out into the street, and took the form of wordy disputes, diversified with a few fights. The reconciliations were, if anything, more noisy still. They led to much more dancing and howling and drinking. We got up now and then and went to the window, and looked out on the revellers prancing about in the raw morning air, but we did not care to join them. It was nearly time to arise before the roar and the row abated very

much, and even after our breakfast, and when on the way to the boat, there were still some choice spirits who seemed to have a few more spasmodic revels left in them. We were aware that we too had had a "night of it," and though not exactly in the thick of the pandemonium, we had been sleepless sharers in its infernal joys. The boat took a few revellers on to Amsterdam. They were not strictly lovely by daylight.



THE MORNING AFTER.

CHAPTER XII.

ON TO SCHEVENINGEN AND VEERE.

AT Amsterdam we only stayed part of a day, wishing to go on to Zeeland, stopping on our way at the Hague and Scheveningen.

The Hague is so well known, of all places in Holland, that no description of it is needed here. Although we thoroughly enjoyed museums and galleries, I must say that we spent the most of our time at Scheveningen. It was so easy to pop into the frequent tram, and be whisked along that lovely, lively, shaded avenue of trees all the way to the very sea. As we sat over our first day's breakfast at the comfortable "Bellevue," and asked ourselves what we should do for the day, we thought that, as the weather was so lovely, we had better make sure of it by going to Scheveningen; and, as it is ever wise to make some provision for a rainy day, the galleries of the Hague would fit in nicely, and the rest of the town we could see when we could not go to Scheveningen. The shady avenue aforementioned is getting rather crowded with stylish villas and restaurants, although they do well to get as far back among the trees as they can. The interest of the avenue was to us the groups of fisher-people, going laden, and coming back empty-basketed from the city. Soon the air gets more redolent of the briny sea, and of the loads and mounds of salted herrings in and about the village. Fashion and rank crowd each other there more and more every year. The little old fishing-village is

fast getting into a corner, and expiring among its fish-like and ancient smells—game to the last. A newfangled burgomaster has been weakening its strongest defence by introducing drainage and sanitary ideas. Fashion makes small impress, however, on even the most frivolous young fish-wife. She would no more



IN SCHEVENINGEN.

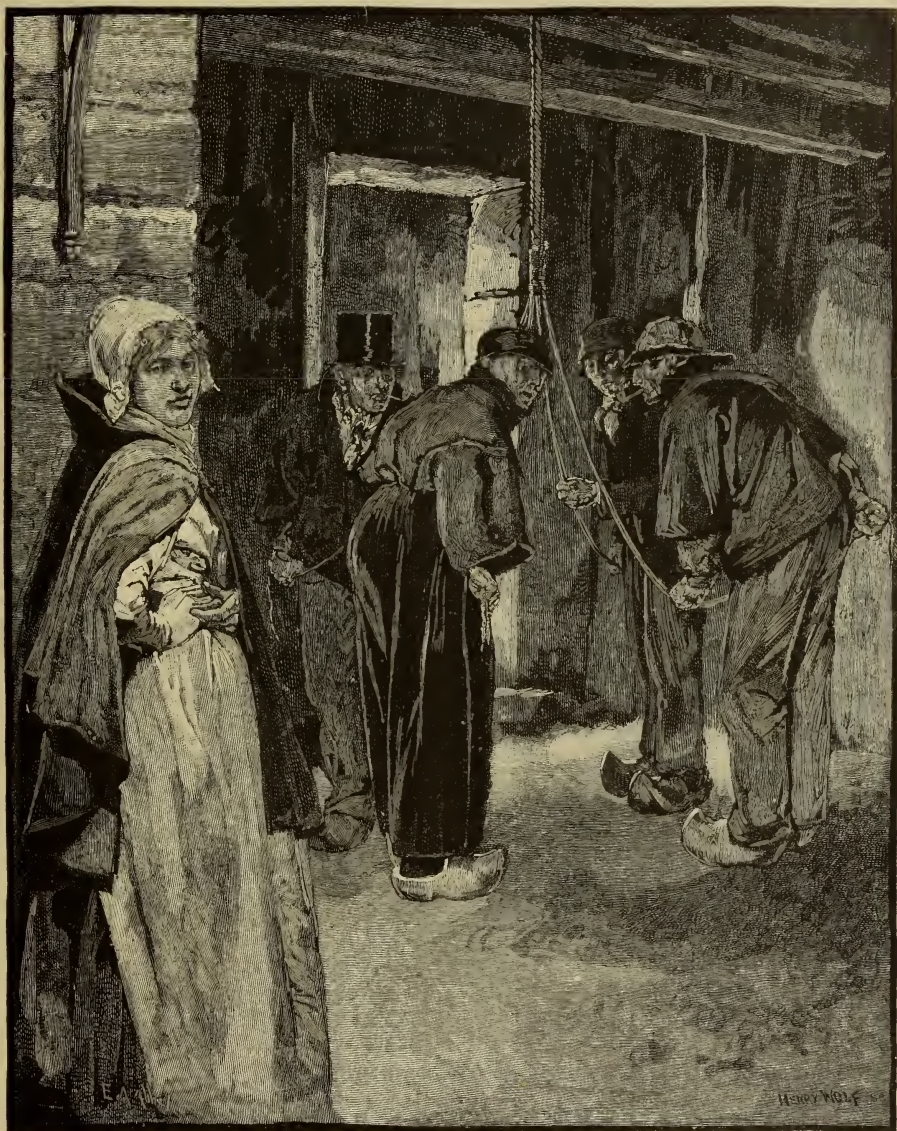
think of putting on the least bit of it than the elegant *mondaine* would of going about in great white sabots. Human nature is weak, however, on certain points. Did we not, looking through a shop window, see a pair of bonny fish-girls buying eau-de-Cologne? What charms did these young sirens expect to work with such very unholy water as this? At the foot of the long

avenue the struggle between fish and fashion comes to a stop. On that deep-rutted sand, strewn with ragged ends of herrings, jolted out of brimming carts, fish is supreme. The broad, tarry-trouserred men, and those bronzed-cheeked, bright-eyed, free-swinging, long-striding, saucy girls, alone seem to find firm footing and pleasant for their great white wooden shoes.

Down by the whity-brown fringe of the gray sea lies a lusty fleet of broad-beamed, brown-sailed fishing craft. Some were being hauled on shore; horses were pulling, windlasses were dragging, men were shouting, women and children were running here and there, carts of fish were careering about. It was as lively and breezy a sight as one would wish to see. It was like no other place in the world but just Scheveningen. Artists all complain that the fisher-people here do not like to be painted or drawn, especially by the "Realistic" set. It was all lovely enough when the "Idealists" used to give them taper fingers and waists, and simpering smiles and little feet; but now that the dread "Realist" has come upon the scene, adding his sense of ugliness to what with them is strength, and making fine character into mere deformity, one only wonders that these long-suffering fish-wives ever spare the lives of their natural enemies. No part of Holland can be called a quiet sketching-ground, and here it is worse than elsewhere. However, we managed, by a certain little plan (patent applied for), to do more than at most places. The faithful Jacob was of great service to us in these straits. It would never do to reveal how, as blunderers might betray its workings and spoil all. We stopped at the open doorway of the old church to take note of some very old fishermen tolling the funeral bell. It was a sad, impressive scene; but I fear that its pictorial side—the bronzed faces and knotty hands, the low tones of the black, blue, and brown of their kippered clothing telling off against the white walls in shadow, the one

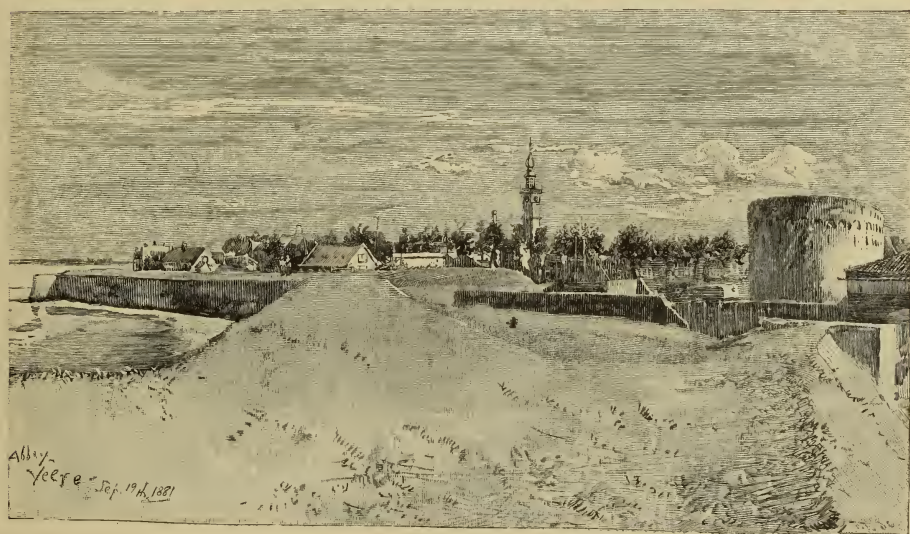
little chink of sunlight that sent warm reflections playing about—overpowered any feeling of sentimentality. The air was so bracing and pure, and the life and movement of Scheveningen so amusing, that we would gladly have stayed longer, but Zeeland was still to be seen, and our time was growing brief. So, banishing our regrets, we took the train to Middelburg, the capital of the Isle of Walcheren, in Zeeland. A fine, large, open station, a new iron bridge, well-built docks, rows of tall new houses, a rattling, banging omnibus over the Belgian pavement to the new Doelan Hotel—such were the first impressions. But as soon as we got out of the railway radius of modernity we came to quaint old streets filled with velvet-clad and silver-buttoned people, and then to a great old market square with a grand old town-hall of the fifteenth century, perfect from doorstep to weathercock, the like of which we had not seen in Holland. It was too late to regret, but I remember that my young friend remarked, "Great Scott!" (his favorite and guarded expletive), "why, this is the place we ought to have come to first of all! And even if we had stayed here all the time, we wouldn't have done badly."

It was late afternoon when we arrived, and we had not much time to explore before dinner, but we made the most of our chances, and saw some lovely old houses, and a few churches (outside), and had a glimpse of the Abbey precincts, with its queer old gardens and hotel, promising ourselves much on the morrow. The day being fair and bright, we thought it wise to go on to Veere, and leave the interiors and the museum of Middelburg for a rainy day. So we had an ark (not funereal this time) and a pair of horses, and made our way, while the sun shone, to this very queer, remote, unfriended little old town, which lies at the back of Walcheren, some four miles from Middelburg. The drive was along a brick-paved road lined with



BELL-RINGERS.

trees, past many thriving farmsteads, not quite so fat and opulent as those of Friesland, but well-to-do. The first sight of Veere was its great, gaunt church, half of it tumbled away, but a small piece, about as big as half Westminster Abbey, still standing. It was a barrack not many years ago, but was not a success. And as the bit now in actual use is not a tenth part of it, it looks rather a dreary mass of ruin. The streets were silent, and the tenanted houses few; the closed houses far too



VIEW OF VEERE.

many, some of them most charming examples of fifteenth and sixteenth century architecture, notably the remains of the "Scottish" house, so called because it was built for some merchant here, during the once-flourishing Scotch trade.

We went to the town-hall, built by the same architect, evidently, who designed the larger and more sumptuous hall at Middelburg. There were around the façade the same statues of the Dukes of Burgundy, but not so many as at the capital.

The interior delighted us beyond anything we had seen. The old council chamber remains exactly the same as it was in its early days. Over the chimney-breast hung the four clenched hands, severed at the wrist, cast in bronze, one holding a hatchet, and one a scourge. The story is that some three centuries ago the council of the town conspired against the reigning duke, and were brought to trial, and sentenced to have each a hand cut off, to warn them not to do it again. There was some good plea for mercy that mitigated the decree, and the offending hands were simply cast in effigy, and hung up as a memento. Here, too, is a famous corporation cup of the same period, so fine and rare that when it was at the Paris exhibition some one offered an enormous sum for it, but the poor and proud council of Veere declined to part with it.

We went to the hotel of the Watch-tower for luncheon, and found it so picturesque and suggestive that we asked about accommodations in case of wishing to come and stay for a few days. The landlady, however, did not seem to care much about this idea of ours. She told Jacob that she didn't like strangers (quaint notion for a hotel-keeper). The daughter of the house, who served us, being a perfect picture in the way of costume, we tried to get her to part with a dress or two. Not a bit of it! She was not quite so prejudiced against strangers as the mother, but still she would stick by her wardrobe. Presently she partly relented. She knew of two girls who had lots of splendid things, and she would go with us to see if they would oblige us. So, when the ark came round, she got in, and piloted us to the place, which was a short distance out of town. I need not say that we were a painful mystery to the gaping towns-people as we drove by, with our gayly attired young maiden chatting and laughing beside us.

We soon came to the place, and down alighted our fair

friend, and went in alone to smooth the way for us. She soon returned, beaming: it was all right; they were willing to listen to the voice of reason. We were ushered into as sweet and cosy a picture of a Dutch interior as one could wish to see. The family were at tea, and asked us to partake, which we did, while the girls went to the high old oaken wardrobe, and took down piles and piles of neatly folded, lavender-scented feminine "things" generally. There was much giggling and blushing; but, reassured by mamma and the landlady's daughter, who was now taking a lively interest, and enjoying the whole thing, they put off their shyness, and showed us how the caps and the gold corkscrews went on, and, finally, the af-



fair became a sort of full-dress rehearsal of effects of costume. Jacob arranged the values for the things, and very cheap they were. I never saw the old boy more carried away than he was during these proceedings. We bade the good people farewell, and then restored our elaborate damsel to her anxious parents and friends.

It was a jolly day, that day, and we looked forward to the morrow for a good time about Middelburg; but, alas! our plans with regard to this lovely Isle of Walcheren were sadly cut short. The next day my young friend found himself so very far from well that we all took alarm. The prospect of an illness in that back town, picturesque though it be, was not alluring. Through the aid of a certain heroic remedy we were able to pack off at once; enjoying the breezy drive to the Flushing boat, the sea air again, the shaking up of a bright but gusty trip across the Channel, and so home, refreshed and reassured, to Kensington and our dusty studios. We were sorry to leave Middelburg so abruptly, but we said each to the other that it should not be for long; and thereafter we built elaborate schemes for our return, and laid out plans more comprehensive than those of a Spanish admiral about to invade the Zuider Zee.

A Little Girl of
Vere



E.A. 1851

CHAPTER XIII.

BACK AGAIN.

IT has always seemed to me a most deliberate and cold-blooded proceeding, at best of times, to set out on a pleasure journey alone by one's self (a sentiment in which many a lone, lorn wife of many a gallivanting husband will only too readily concur, without doubt); but on that particularly damp and drizzly night in October, when I, sad and solitary, sank into a cold corner seat of the Queensborough train for the Flushing boat, and heard, as we slid out of the station, the sharp patter of rain drive against the windows, and saw the ghostly shreds of steam scud by, it added awfully to the loneliness and depression, and seemed more cold and deliberate than usual. It had all been so carefully planned between us—this little trip. There were to be no false starts, no chasing of the wild goose vainly all over the "Land of Cuyp," this time. Maps had been studied, all sorts of information bearing on the country had been got at, and carefully stored up, and, after all, this was the upshot! The heretofore Damon of my Dutch voyaging was obliged to go sooner, and I could only go later, than we intended, and the only balm and consolation we could offer to each other was the chance of meeting blithely in some weedy town, somewhere on the damp surface of the Low Countries.

It was small consolation to seek for sympathetic quotations from the poets, and to rack and twist them to suit the melan-

choly occasion. I was rather more inclined to smile than to weep when the exquisite words of the Laureate seemed to get mauled and rolled over and over to the scurrying clatter of the train :

*"Who broke our sweet companionship?
And led thee where I cannot see
Nor follow, though I fly in haste.
And think, that somewhere in the waste
The 'chestnut' sits and waits for me."*

It was a relief to get away from temptation to any further atrocities of the kind—from the parody-infected air of the train to the windy, wet decks of the waiting steamer.

I have already given a slight "impressionist" sketch of the first view of Holland at early morn from the steamer's deck.



AN EARLY SKETCH.

There was no healthy impulse to repeat the picture, with a slightly altered background of gray mizzle, on that particular morning; in fact, there was not much to see except the dim, damp outlines of the Flushing landing-place, when I came on deck.

Familiarity with the Dutch language, to the extent of a dozen or two words, gave me a certain feeling of calm security through the various little ordeals of the custom-house, and I soon found myself on the train, bound for the good old town of Middelburg.

It was a pet part of the new plan to begin Holland again where we had left off so grudgingly. We had only had a mere glimpse of the quaint old capital of this Island of Walcheren when we were hurried away, vowing to return on the first opportunity.

My friend and, in a certain vague sense, companion, whom I did not so much regard as "Lost, but gone before," had written to me choice bits of experience and advice to be followed from the moment I should land at Flushing—advice which, by the way, I found, from altered conditions of things, somewhat tiresome to follow. Example: "Don't take the train from Flushing to Middelburg, but walk across the country—it is lovely in the rosy morning light. There is a jolly old inn half-way—stay to breakfast—awfully pretty girl in gold-plated head-gear to wait—beast of an old landlord—fire you out if not careful"—this was sadly suggestive of thoughtless light-heartedness (my friend was blessed with a companion in his wanderings, I forgot to say)—"Take the second turning down the third lane, and cross the bridge that leads to the field," etc.

I did not, on my chilly, drizzly morning, see this little excursion in the same light that the two more happy souls saw it

on the more favored morn that broke so bright and rosy—naturally. So I took the prosaic and more direct train.

The distance between Flushing and Middelburg is so short that, notwithstanding a longish wait at the station and a most deliberate express train—when once started—it was still early morning when we arrived at our destination. I say we, as there was seemingly another blinking passenger besides myself that descended, but he disappeared so suddenly into the misty air that he must have been a ghost. I was left alone to the well-meant but utterly foggy attentions of a dank youth who appeared to be ticket-taker, porter, and station-master in one. The only visible conveyance to take me to the hotel was a man with a weird, elongated wheelbarrow.

Stay! there was even a choice between the man with the wheelbarrow and a long, frail, sketchy youth, who offered to carry the things on his back. He seemed to have grown up over-night, like some pale stalk of rank asparagus, and to be in danger of cracking in two if bent under the burden of a traveling-bag. I took the wheelbarrow man, as I had not the heart to try any experiments on the youth. So, failing as porter, he offered himself as guide. I was obliged to discourage even this ambition in him, although it went against me, he looked so pathetic, and eager to earn the breakfast that his weedy constitution stood so much in need of. Failing as guide, he became a hopeful follower, and shambled on after us at a respectful distance. While he did so he reminded me of poor "Smike," with the cuffs of his faded, outgrown jacket half-way up to his elbows, and his well-patched trousers shrunk almost to his knees. He saw us to the hotel door, and had evidently, like "Melancholy" in his own case, "marked me for his own."

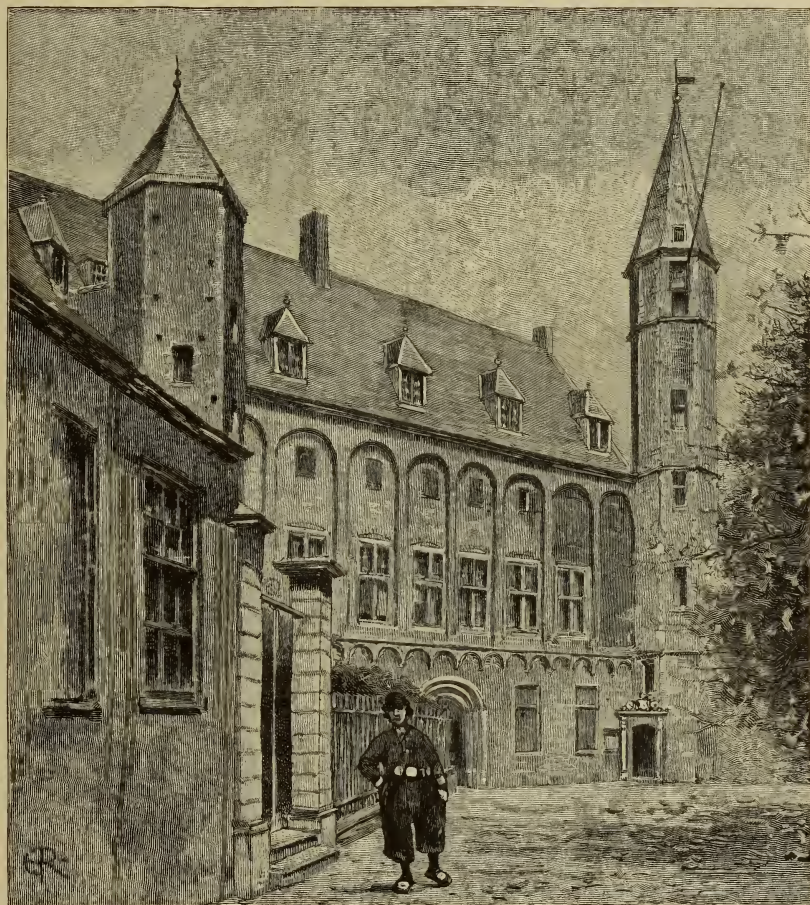
When we could prevail on the rosy young giantess to stop splashing and squirting water over the fanlight of the hotel

door a moment, so that we might enter, I found a tolerably cheery welcome. There was a moment's shade of gloom when I declined to take any more breakfast. There had been a kind of one on the boat, and a further trifling with one at the station; a third one, no matter how sketchy, would have been mere vanity. So, not to lose time or happy chance or the misty morning effects, I soon arranged hotel matters, and turned out again into the chill air. Smike was waiting for me, pathetic and eager. He kindly pointed out the very obvious Town-hall, and remarked, "Museum." If I could have spoken Dutch fluently, I should probably have spoken it harshly to that weedy lad, but the moment's hesitation about terms sufficiently abusive gave me time to reflect. Why should I discourage the only evidence of enterprise that seemed to be awake in the place? He was, furthermore, picturesque and quaint, and the very twin brother of the poor drudge over whom so many bitter boyish tears were shed when "Nickleby" was read for the first time—yea, even the tenth time! This Smike was evidently no great linguist; he had small English, and less French, and but hazy German. But why not—he looked long-suffering and defenceless—why not try some elementary Dutch on him? Poor boy, he seemed delighted with it, and understood it nearly as well as I did myself. And I, guessing at the probable replies to my own observations, could frequently understand him.

We would go, then, and see the Abbey. That venerable pile at best of times is slightly shut in, and naturally somewhat damp, mouldy, and depressed; but on this chill October morning, with the great, gaunt trees weeping tears of thick dew over the bed of dead leaves that strewed the soppy ground, reeking with stale miasma, it was far, far from cheerful. Artistic or antiquarian enthusiasm needs much pumping to insure a warm or steady flow on such morning. Poor Smike left all such

pumping to me ; he was gradually turning a delicate mauve tint with cold and damp and long-deferred hope. There is a fairish hotel in part of the Abbey building, but it is rather shaded, and haunted with the reek of rotting leaves on wet autumnal days. (I much preferred the "Doelan," in the fine open square.) There are government offices and schools, a church or two, and various other institutions within the precincts of the fine old rambling pile, which must have covered more ground than the Abbey of Westminster, at one time. Its history is the sad and stormy history of most abbeys. I should like to write a little more of it than I have space to give—all the little I can remember or turn to—but the temptation to keep on would be dangerous. Better not begin ! It was getting chilly, or, rather, it was getting more and more so. Smike was turning from his tint of watery pink to the off-white of a farthing dip, and his teeth were all a-chatter.

"This will do for the first entertainment," I managed to convey to him. "Not a bit of it," he managed to reply. He was bent on showing me the "Park," and so much bent that I did not like to suddenly turn him the other way, for fear of seeing him crack in twain, like a roughly-plucked forked radish. The Park was not far, so I let him lead the way. It was not far enough, in fact. I should have liked to walk off the chill of the Abbey, and it was only like stepping out of an ice-house into a cold bath. The ornamental waters were further enriched by a thick litter of fallen leaves upon their emerald mat of duck-weed, which seemed like a long stretch of Persian carpet of simple and severe design. The weeping willows dripped their pendent switches dejectedly over the chilly ooze. The morning dew lay in thick beads on everything ; it even seemed to bead the surface of the fat, rich water. I need not say that there was not a living thing, not even a duck or frog, enjoying



PART OF ABBEY, MIDDELBURG.

that rank, lush paradise. Neither did we venture much farther than the gate. One glance at the cindery path, littered with drenched leaves and twigs, one peep at the drippy willows, would suffice as well as a wilderness of such moist joys. Even Smike appeared to be taken aback—he had probably never seen it before under such a depressing aspect—and almost apologized for intruding on its bath of dew and fog. “We will go back now to the market-place.”

He offered no objection, merely drew my attention to a long, green-mouldy colonnade that we were passing, deserted by human shape, strewn with wetter, rottener, and bigger leaves than we had yet seen, festooned with beaded spider-webs, just glistening in the now appearing sun. This institution was the “Bourse” (Dutch, *Beurs*), or Merchants’ Exchange. Business was evidently rather torpid, if not dead and gone altogether.

“Business bad?” I managed to express to my guide. He smiled a wan smile, and waved his pallid finger sadly, and said something which I took to be a Dutch equivalent for the “last ditch,” or some other thing equally hopeless. I could now see the pinnacled tower of the Town-hall shining afar, and hear the sweet, low wrangle of its archaic chimes. So I dismissed Smike, with an odd assortment of brasses, nickels, coppers, and other specimens of small Dutch currency. He radiated enormously in broadest smiles, and hied him off to breakfast as fast as he could shuffle. Our conversation had shown symptoms of lagging. He began to suspect that I didn’t any longer know the proper answers to my own questions. And as for being able to guess any chance observation of his, I was rather losing ground than improving in my “shots.” I even think that when we parted, in view of that guiding tower, we were equally glad to be rid of each other. I did not need him, as I could easily sight the lofty spire when I wished to return to the hotel.

There is a very curious old sixteenth-century house, with richly carved front, showing, in a series of tablets in marble, the manner and mystery of stone-working—quarrying, shipping, cutting, building, and so forth. I did not exactly know the way to it, nor did I care to ask, preferring to amuse myself with trying to find it by wandering off in the direction in which I thought it ought to be. I knew that it was called the “Steen Huis,” if I wanted to ask at any time, and with a vague recollection of having seen a photograph of it (to identify it by, when I saw it), I thought I would let it discover itself.

After much meandering up and down and around, now forgetting, now remembering, my vague quest, I came suddenly upon it. It was like seeing an old friend, for some reason or other, and yet I had never seen it before in the concrete. There had been a wholesale tampering with the lower story; it was no longer in the stone-tablet trade, but given over to dealings in sailors’ clothing, marine stores, and bunting generally. The preserved part of the front is well worthy of study, or, at least, inspection, as an example of the stone fronts of its period. It is one of the best specimens of its class that I have seen in the Netherlands.

CHAPTER XIV.

MIDDELBURG.

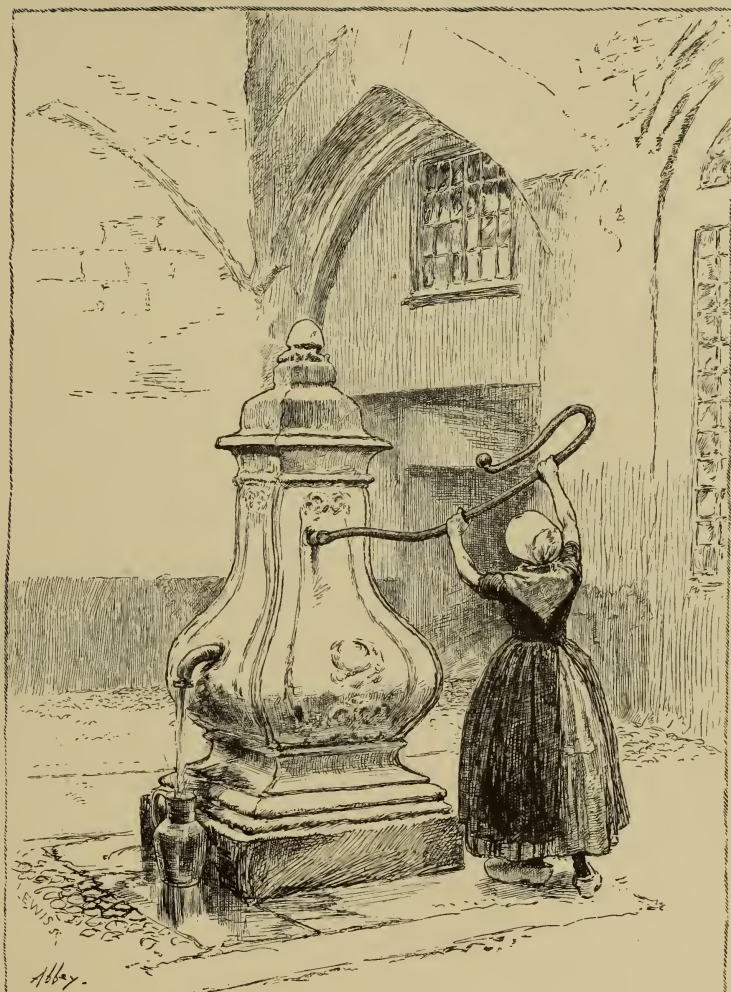
OF all towns in Holland, I think—after seeing about fifty—Middelburg is the most peculiarly representative and Dutch. It has in it the most charming examples of architecture and costume that one could wish to see. It is quaint and original, clean to a degree, well-kept, and not too dead and gone; in fact, on a market-day, it is for the time being about as lively and stirring a place as one could happen on; and they do say that, on the occasion of the annual kermesse, which lasts about a week, the great market-place, at night, when the fun is wildest, is no faint hint of a public festival in the regions down below. So much of an affair is it here that they talk of the past one for six months, and prepare for the next one during the rest of the year.

In passing along some of the silent, well-swept quays, under the tall trees, one is struck by the number of well-to-do and even stately residences, seemingly the homes of the descendants of the "merchant princes" who made their fortunes here when Middelburg had a commerce to boast of. There were no finer docks and waterways in all the country, but, alas! fickle Commerce one fine day found other harbors. The big ships sailed away one by one into the "Eternal Whither," and came back no more. The docks and basins took on the scum of idleness, busy shipyards grew silent, and the half-finished hulks rotted where they stood. 'Tis the fate of many once thriving towns!

But Middelburg was only sleeping a very long Rip Van Winkle drowse, and there was still strong life in it somewhere. It woke to energy and action some fifteen years ago. When its old neighbor and rival, Flushing, began its splendid new harbors and docks and station, high hopes were held that the new life-blood let into Flushing would revive the entire Island of Walcheren. Middelburg "shook itself together" for the long-looked-for return of prosperity, and new docks, canals, and basins were made, big enough to float the vast commerce she wished to see again bustling about her long-deserted quays.

But, sad to say, after much outlay of money and labor, after grand opening ceremonies and much kermessing, coy Commerce came not, to any great extent, to gladden the souls of the good burghers, either of Flushing or Middelburg. Let us say, rather, that for many years it did not come. Just lately there is a better show of shipping at both places. "Time was" when this same Middelburg was the richest, proudest, and most powerful city in the Netherlands. Its most prosperous times were during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when all the wines of France and Spain that came, not only for the entire country, but for towns along the Rhine far into Germany, had first to pay duty here. There exist still many relics of this powerful "octroi." There is still the "Rouenische Kade," where the wine-galleons of Rouen disgorged their cargoes and their heavy customs duties. The wool-staplers of England and Scotland had also rich and powerful houses here and at Veere, near by, under the protection of the Duke of Burgundy, who married a daughter of James I. of Scotland.

I am driven to allude to these palpable guide-book facts, as they lead up to certain other matters which I wish to mention presently; besides, it is quite possible that there are some remote



IN THE QUADRANGLE OF THE ABBEY.

and untravelled readers who have never had the supreme joy of nursing either a "Baedeker" or its red twin, "Murray," through "Holland and Belgium." Besides, those who have had the advantage of that addition to a sketchy education have more than likely mislaid it for the moment.

Now, a great assistance to any one's enjoyment of this charming old town is to "get up" just a little of its past history before coming to it. Havard (in his "Heart of Holland") tells one just enough—that is, one who merely wishes to visit the place as a Rambler, and not as a student of history. As for my own duty to my readers, I am sure that they would much sooner follow me as a simple, wandering sketcher than as a more vagrant and sketchy historian. I know that the history of Zeeland is as tempting as a fairy tale—so enchanting that, if once I began it, there would be no stopping me.

Take this same Isle of Walcheren, for instance, just for a wee bit. Before the Romans came to civilize it, by fire and sword and slavery, the country was overrun by wandering tribes of Gauls. It was one dense forest, of such depths of tangle and despair that it was known for centuries as "*La Forêt sans Pitié.*" What a background for the imagination to fill in with wild pictures! What sirens rise up as one goes on! What temptations to weave in the thin gold threads of the sad history of Jacqueline of Bavaria! She was more of a martyr than a heroine; more of a Fair Rosamond than a Joan of Arc; her memory is still a poem to the good folks of Zeeland. One moment's turning aside, and I should forget the things I came to see and sketch—the things of to-day. By the way, what a spiritual grindstone it is getting to be! and how often the spiritual grinders of small, even-edged things wish to bring every mortal face sharply against it!

"Why don't you draw the things of to-day? Why do you

stray off into the forgotten past, into fairyland, into mythology? My quarrel with you is that you don't do the things you see around you," said, one day, a critic of this stamp to an artist of the other.

"Nay, that is not your quarrel at all," said he of the erring pencil. "You wish me to paint the things *you* see about you, which is quite a different matter. Don't you suppose Shakespeare saw Bottom and Titania, Puck and Ariel, as plainly as you see this brier-root pipe?"

Which reminds me that, instead of giving reasons for keeping to the "things around me," I am straying into arguments that lead to shadowland.

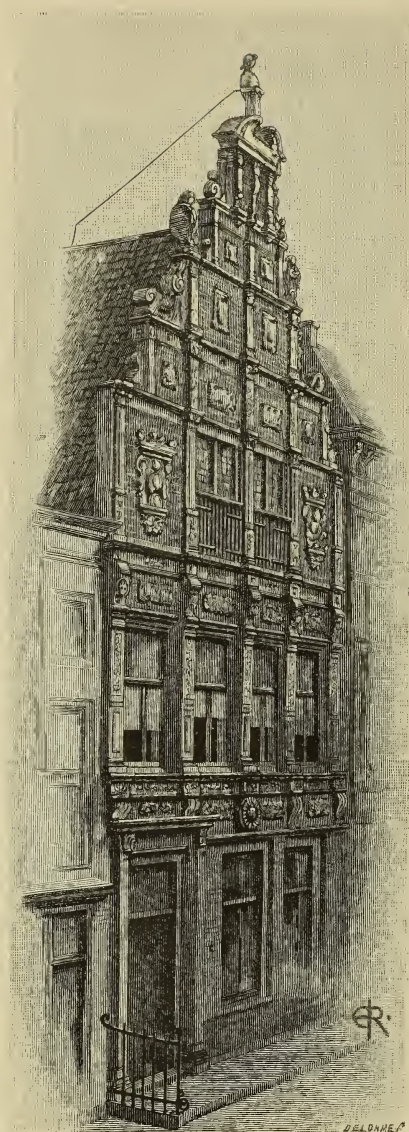
How happy we three were on our last trip, when our only historians were Motley (whom we knew only "by sight") and Jacob, whom, if we took at all, it was with cellars full of salt!

It was still early forenoon, and I was wandering, loose and free, down and around crooked and devious streets, and under archways into blind alleys, and out of them into wherever the picturesque led me, making my way back to the market-place. When I wished to make sure of my Town-hall weathercock, I had only to wait until I came to an intersection of a few streets or canals, and it would show itself. And as its silvery *carillon* rang out some small tinkle every seven minutes, one could not well get out of ear-shot, if it should happen to get lost to view. There were lots of the picturesque country people about the streets, and as I followed stray groups, sketching as I walked, I was led rather a dance. I generally found, however, that no matter how often I lost sight of the Town-hall, I could always—and did often, without wishing—get back to the Abbey. This began to bother me, finally, for when I had fairly started for my Town-hall once or twice, and, losing sight of my spire through winding, narrow short-cuts, had found myself back again every

time to my starting-point at the Abbey, I began to say, "Confound this tiresome old relic of antiquity, it seems to be a loadstone!"

As all roads lead to Rome, so did they here all tend to this one spot. There was, at first, only a small, circular chapel built, and then the great Abbey gradually grew around it, the village grew around that, and the city, finally, with its walls and ram-parts, grew around all. The streets mostly diverge from the great central church; others seem to wind themselves spirally about it, as if planned by some old monkish humorist, to prevent the people from straying from the fold, even if they wished to. I think I got that special bit of street-plan well into my understanding before I got out of the merry-go-round of the sacred precincts. There was no time lost, however. It is mostly all fish that comes into the sketcher's net. The Town-hall looks all the better if it has a foreground of the picturesque market-day people. By the time I arrived there the picture was complete, even to an effect of golden sunlight struggling through the haze of the cool October forenoon. Market-day is generally a holiday as well, in Holland. On the slightest pretext, out come all the antique finery and all the family jewels; and they wear them in profusion, men, women, and children, in Zeeland. They pile on the entire hoard, on nearly every part of their person available. The dress of the Zeelanders is, by far, the most complete and elaborate to be found in any part of Holland. It is rarely, nowadays, that the men resist the inroads of modern fashion, but here they keep strictly to the costume of their forefathers. Nothing creeps in to mar its perfection; it is not worn only in part; it is complete, and that seems to be their pride. Fashions may come and go, but they go on forever.

Still, if you take the *ensemble* of the male "get up," it is rather mixed in periods and styles. The hat, one shape of it especially—there are three varieties—with the universal cut of



HOUSE OF THE GOLDEN SUN.

hair and the closely shaven face, has a purely fifteenth-century effect. Such a number did I meet that reminded me of the portraits of Louis XI. of France, or certain heads in Van Eyck's pictures! The shirt-collars, often embroidered with black lines, and fastened with large gold button-links, are fifteenth century, also. The jacket seems to be a survival of the jerkin of two centuries later. The velvet knee-breeches are evidently a century later still, as the shoes are. The silver buckles on the nether garments are often chased richly; while as for the four great silver waist-buttons, or, rather, plates, that half encircle the belt, embellished often with Scriptural subjects in *repoussé*, there is a vague sort of impression that they must have survived since the wandering Gauls overran the islands of Zeeland. The other style of nether garment is short, wide,

flowing velvet trousers. On both these there is the same profusion of silver plate, and both styles have on either side, back

of the hip, a deep, narrow pocket. Exactly where the wild Texan Ranger secludes his revolver the Zeelander carries his brace of sheath-knives. They are about the size and shape and usefulness of the sort of knife that one takes to a good-sized ham. The handles are often of richly chased silver, or the more modest boxwood, carved in quaint old design. These murderous implements, I need not say, are carried more to complete the costume of the country than for actual service, though they do say that every proper Zeelander knows well how to use them in case of need. We all know how unhappy the most amiable full-dressed Highlander would be without a few dirks about his girdle, and at least one handy in his garter. So doth the genial Zeeland peasant sport his pair of carvers, not necessarily to use on a friend, but rather on his bread and cheese.

The men are a strongly built race, with clean-cut, serious features, bright, dark eyes, that look through you, and yet kindly enough natured I found them, for all their stern looks. The women are very bonny now and then; a bright, clear complexion, rosy and fresh and strong, and as much given to smiles and levity as the men are to grimness and gravity. Of course, I am still speaking of the country people, for even the peasantry are extremely well-to-do.

The towns-people are like nearly all town people the world over—just one regulation pattern, as if clad by the same tailors, “as per sample.” But, in towns like Middelburg, the servants are often from the country round about, and they keep to their costume religiously. I was buying some gold head-gear here, such as they sell to the country girls, and, wishing to find out how it should be put on, the jeweller called in his servant from her window-splashing, who took off her own corkscrews and dangling disks of gold—much more gorgeous than those I was

bargaining for—and, with a certain air of condescension, tried on for me my simpler arrangement.

The “attitude,” so to speak, of the Zeelander is more dignified and proud than in most parts of Holland; in fact, I doubt if, in all Europe, you will find people with more of the air of the “grand seigneur” about them. Indeed, I have heard that the air of repose about some of the old Dutch towns is not stagnation, from their point of view; it is what they admire. They don’t wish to bustle, or be bustled about. They are all as rich as they care to be, and they don’t want to be any happier. When a stray tourist arrives at one of their old-fashioned inns he is made to feel that he is only entertained as a favor, and that they don’t really want him.

In Middelburg, however, there is a certain movement that looks like a lingering love of trade. The shops are numerous and good—most of them, as usual, for the sale of finery and confectionery.

There was a constant fascination in and about the old Town-hall for me. The outside is very perfect, from door-scraper to the gold weathercock. Built by a Burgundian architect, in 1468, it is more French than Flemish or Dutch in character. At the butchers’ stalls, in one corner of the building, the set-out of the meat, the chopping-blocks and hooks, and the general arrangements of the place give one a perfect picture of the shambles and fleshers’ stalls of the latter part of the fifteenth century. The inside of the building, I grieve to say, has not quite escaped the demon of modern improvement. The fine old council-chamber, however, has been preserved pretty much in its original form. They do say that the sketch for the council-chamber scene in “The Bells,” as played by the Irving company, was taken from this very quaint old room. Holland is rich in old council-chambers, and there are few finer than this and the one at Veere—or, rather,

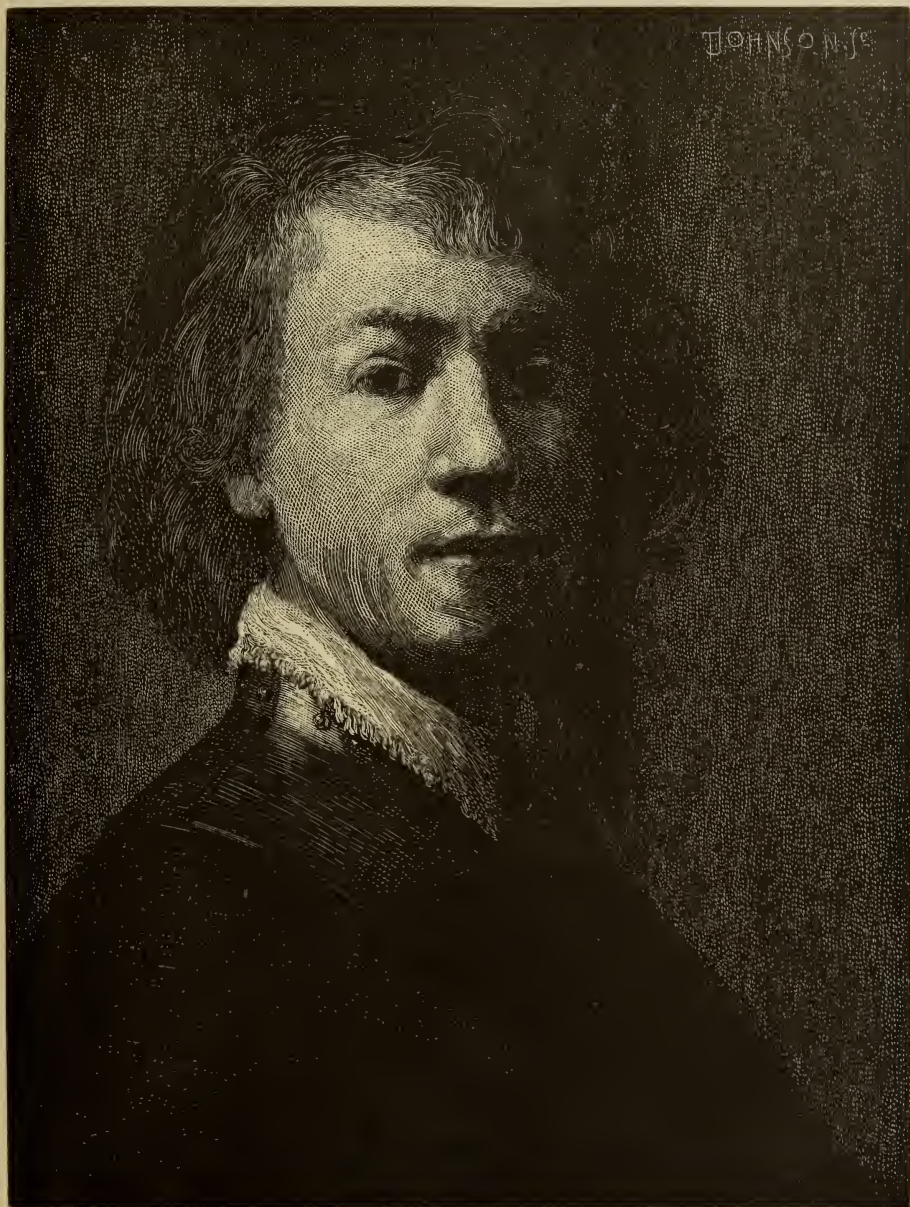
than the Veere one was, before they took down the bronze hands. There is a most interesting collection of antiquities in this Middelburg Town-hall, filling several rooms, mostly with objects connected with the history of Zeeland. There are, among other things, the grand old feasting-batteries of the various guilds and corporations; tankards and beakers and dishes of gold and silver; plates and trenchers of pewter and quaint old Delft; goblets of glass of Venice and Bohemia; corporation seals, medals, and badges; flags, banners, and pennons; warlike weapons of every period; old instruments of music; books, parchments, and views of old towns; plans and maps; pictures of pageants and ceremonies, many of them showing bygone festivities at this same old burg. But most interesting to us were the several fine old guild and corporation pictures, some on the same scale, and in manner of treatment like those that Franz Hals and Van der Helst painted so gloriously years after these were done. These have a certain charm of grim sincerity and naïvete which the others, with all their magisterial grandeur, lack. The portraits of the leading worthies in the guilds of wine-coopers and wine-merchants are most vigorous, and "personal," in the last degree, to every defect or merit of the originals.

CHAPTER XV.

JACOB'S RETURN.

TO entirely enjoy the grand corporation and guild portraiture of Rembrandt, Hals, and Van der Helst, the art student should see these curiously fine examples of an earlier and kindred school. This was my second visit to them, and they seemed even better than at first, when we all but screamed with joy at our discovery. I also remember how Jacob came down to solid facts at once, while our delight was still gushing, by assuring us that though that grand old race of wine-merchants and their monopolies had gone ("where the woodbine twineth," let us hope), there was still, here and there, such splendid old Burgundy in Middelburg—to keep up the tradition of some of the ancient houses, so to speak—"Well, if you carry some of dot old wine droo de churchyard at night, you not pe zafe; de spooks get out of deir grave and follow you."

Ingenuous old boy! The thought of him at that moment suggested "Why not?" I was getting rather depressed; I felt that, somehow, I had the whole weight of the fallen fortunes of Zeeland on my soul; that I ought to be able to suggest some scheme that would bring back its former grandeur, and was either a fool or a craven for not setting about it at once. Even when the polite custodian offered to show me the dungeon and the various instruments of mediæval torture—rack, wheel, thumbscrew, and spiked collar—even offering to show me how



A REMBRANDT WE RECALL.

they worked (without the victim, naturally), my mind was far away. I knew Jacob's address: "No, thank you; no more rack or thumbscrew to-day. How far is the telegraph office? Round the corner? Good-morning." And in five minutes I had wired to that faithful henchman of last year to meet me by next train from Amsterdam.

I made a few pencillings in a loungey way towards the hotel, and then turned in for luncheon—not a bad forenoon's work—and a fine appetite. There was my little table, with the *couvert* laid, and Jacob's reply beside my plate. He would be with me by the night train. I felt a certain load off my mind. At early morn I had almost decided to do Holland this time without him; but, as incident after incident of the Faithful One's usefulness and cheery qualities came to my mind, I could not resist him.

Dutch is such an awful language to be left all earthly alone with! You can never believe that the people are likely to understand the hideous gurgles and croaks you are preparing back of your throat just before you utter them. And yet, if they would try not to disguise the spelling, there is much that is good English about the Dutch language, especially about the Frisian variety. It was a gushing scene, our meeting at the windy railway station near to midnight. There was such effusion of greeting, such display of "fatted calf" at supper afterward, that the wondering natives must have thought that I was in some manner celebrating the Return of a Prodigal Father—or uncle.

"I was yoost at de delekraf office by de 'otel wiz a barty of dourist to zee de windmills of Zaandam. Zo I 'ands ofer de barty to a vriendt, and I zay to myzalif, 'You may all go to Yaricho!' and puts some cloze in my pag, and I yumps in de drain, an' here I am. We have a good time again, I bets to myzalif as I comes along."

I then unfolded to Jacob my little idea, which was, to take a trap in the morning and drive as far as we could around the sea edge of the island, if the day promised to be fine; rainy days to be kept for in-door exploring. The morrow was a perfect thing of its kind—a hazy, cool October morning. The trap, a towering landau, with a strong team, and rueful driver, was soon ready, and we were rattling over the long stretch of well-paved brick road towards Veere. The whole face of nature had a wet, shiny look, as if it had been drenched down, Dutch fashion, with plentiful buckets of water over-night.

The landscape stretched before us, steaming and glistening in the morning sun. I tried to interest Jacob in effects of misty sunrise. “Oh, dot’s de *doo*; dot is not rain last night. De *doo* she is varry strong here. Dot shows a good deal of ague about, dose *doo*.” I then tried to lure Jacob into statistics—the relative amount of ague to the square Dutchman, etc.—but that wary worthy so mixed his figures with saving “exceptions”—*viz.*, schnapps and smoking as preventives—that we came to no conclusion, except that, were it not for schnapps and maag-bitter, the average Zeelander would be shaken off the face of the islands. Beguiling the time with much information that “went in one ear and out the other,” we soon came to Veere. We drove to a small, neat, anxious inn, with the very un-Dutch name of the Hotel Rolandi. They seemed much more pleased to see us than the Tower Inn landlady last year, who did not care to take us, as we were “strangers.” We strolled on to the Town-hall, and saw the newly arranged museum in it—a gaunt, bare, upper room—well meant enough, the whole thing, on the part of the new burgomaster and council, but what demon of bad taste possessed them to denude the fine old council-chamber of many objects that made it the most unique room of its kind in Europe? The bronze fists were



VEERE.

taken down from the chimney-breast, where they had hung for centuries as a warning to traitors, and were ticketed away in a glass show-case, with stupid odds and ends lying about them, spread out flat on the rawest of white paper. The council-chamber was not to be seen, as the council was in session. I should have liked to take that fine example of a Zeeland pocket carver, and make a collection of various ears to keep the fists company. I lost all interest in the rest of the treasures. Even the great gold cup palled upon me. To do the place justice, however, the Town-hall is still worth seeing, all the same.

The sapient council seems to have taken the old town in hand too, and furbished it up for stray visitors. The streets looked cleaner, the houses more cheerful, and the cobwebby little shops seemed to have a fresh supply of tinned mysteries from Chicago. Here, now, is a town with a history to wring tears. Some centuries ago it was called Kamp-veer, being then the ferrying-place to an opposite town of importance called Kampen. But one awful night Kampen disappeared entirely

from the face of the earth, and simply "slumped," as they say in the far West, beneath the waters and mud that engulfed it. There being no longer any Kampen to ferry to, this town was then called merely Veere, and, as the situation was good for trade, though of treacherous foundation otherwise, it grew and grew, rich and prosperous and famous. It even used to do battle with Middelburg in good mediæval fashion over certain rights to tolls and customs. At one time there were two great sea-towers—the one remaining being the lesser—and a goodly portion of the trading part of the town was across the harbor, about the great tower. One wild night of tempest and earthquake shook the island again, and when morning broke there was no opposite tower nor sister town nor townspeople to be seen. The muddy sea swirled about over all as if they had never been. No wonder that the remaining portion of the town took a discouraged view of the situation, and moved itself to a land of greater stability. This cruel chapter in the history of Veere is even more complete in the history of many of the lost towns and islands of Holland.

On some of the very old maps there are places marked down where towns of some importance flourished, there are roads traced through prosperous lands, there are islands named, and that is all that remains of them, this trace on the maps and the mention in old chronicles. The sea has, on one tempestuous night or another, swept all beneath its waters. It gives one a feeling, even to-day, of a shifting foothold. It is a long time ago; but, if history takes to repeating itself, one feels most cheerful here who reads the least of the sea's doings in ages gone by. We found little of fresh interest in Veere, and, with some small feeling of misgiving appropriate to the locality, we bade adieu to a place of such shaky antecedents.



TOWN-HALL, VEERE.

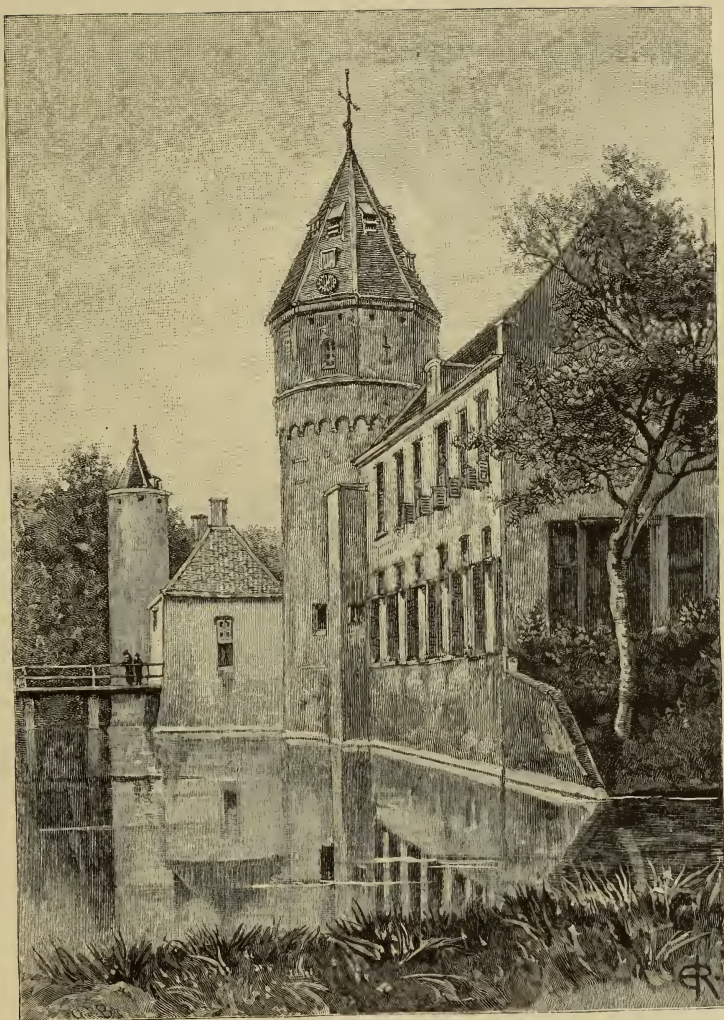
CHAPTER XVI.

DOMBURG AND THE DIKES.

SKIRTING away along the dikes, we had a good opportunity of seeing some of the incessant toil, some of the constant engineering and battling with the sea, to keep it at anything like a safe distance. The dikes about this island are, perhaps, the finest, the most constantly guarded, in all the country. The dike-workers are a distinct class, a guild, in fact, jealous of their craft, and its rights and privileges. It is not the first-comer who may be a regular dike-worker, even if he wish to be. We saw great gangs of them going from point to point with pick and shovel, ever on the lookout for weak spots in the great embankment, ever refacing it with miles of concrete, and strengthening every point with strong groins running into the sea.

It was almost pathetic to note with what solicitude every blade of the binding bent-grass was coaxed to grow. Every little tuft was watched and tended as if it were some choice tulip. The top of the dike formed a level, firm road, stretching away for miles. The sea looked so mild and gray and innocent, as it gently lapped the edges of the mighty barriers, that it was only by an effort that one could fancy it an enemy capable of mischief. The breezes were simply delicious and fresh, coming over the wide North Sea. Inland the scenery was flat and grim and serious. Farmsteads in the far distance looked green and fat enough. Sheep and kine were numerous in the rich fields. Just over the

edge of the dikes were the little scattered hamlets of the fisher people and the polder-men. The dike-workers lived a good deal of a roving life, camping out here and there, as their work called them from one point to another. Sometimes the wind had blown up, and the seas tossed up, great long meandering mounds of sand, helping to back and strengthen the dikes. On these billowy hillocks the grass was carefully planted in little regular tufts, and stunted pines were set wherever the tempest would spare them to grow. All sorts of binding vegetation were carefully protected. The very children knew enough to let it alone. Just before reaching Domburg one drives through the domain of Westhoeven, and past the old *château*. The building dates back, parts of it, to the fifteenth century, but it has all been so restored and villa-fied that it might be anything. Oak-panelled rooms have been painted, and others depanelled, and papered with French arsenical papers. French windows have been cut in down to the ground. Ah me! It was unoccupied, and we got permission to go over it. What a place it must have been before the restorer and villa-fier came! It was bright, and open, and airy, but crude enough to set one's teeth on edge. The last of its race of occupiers had given it up, and it was to have been pulled down to save property tax. Some kind, enthusiastic lady, with the money to indulge the whim, bought it for a song, to save it, if only as a relic. The whole place has been made damp and dank, like too many places, not only in Holland, but elsewhere, by overwhelming it with dense, lofty trees. There was no chance for the free air and sun to warm the damp out of it, and let the fresh air put life into it. If the lady be wise she will cut down most of the trees for timber, and make the house habitable. The old gardener who showed the place seemed tumbling to pieces with ague. If he had been soaked all night in the slimy green water of the moat, he could not have looked



CHÂTEAU OF WESTHOEVEN.

more damp and clammy. It was a relief to get out of the dense, chill park into the breezy sunshine again.

After a short drive we came upon the fashionable sea-side resort of Domburg, where we stopped for luncheon. It is here that, in the season, one will find the *élite* of Zeeland. We found nobody whatever, as the season had just closed. The air is magnificent, and the sea pure and uncontaminated with sewage from the little village. The scenery is severe and simple—mostly sand-dunes, with sparse tufts of bent-grass, and little nooks of stunted, shrivelled, inland-blown trees. There are a couple of hotels; one, the Bad Hotel, kept by the proprietor of the Doelan, at Middelburg, very comfortable indeed. There are a few modern villas and shops, and, for the rest, it is a queer, clean little fishing-village—a perfect place for the sketcher of picturesque children. I think I never saw such a lot of good material in so small a place. I remarked one very delightful old house and garden, with a mossy old brick wall and a gateway, with flourishing iron-work figures. Domburg is no new upstart as a bathing-place. There are Roman remains, suggesting that those astute old bathers knew all about it, and had, perhaps, a “Bad Hotel” of their own when they occupied this part of Zeeland. I felt, as we drove away, that I could gladly have stayed on a week, and rather have enjoyed the deserted village, emptied of its summer *élite*. Marking it down in my memory as a good place to revisit, we again took the sandy, embanked road.

We stopped to rest the horses and refresh our melancholy driver, at West Kappel, which I remembered as the *locale* of the play of “Annie Mie,” given by the Dutch company with such success, some four years ago, in London, and afterwards done in English, with less effect than it deserved. It was a most truthful and interesting study of these quaint people, well worth the seeing.

It was here that we noticed the greatest number of dike-workers and polder-men, and it is just about here that the whole science is at its best development; so that if any one should feel an interest in this one peculiar expression of Dutch genius, this is the favored spot. The sketching is well worth while—it is stern and serious enough, in all conscience—there is little frivolity of archaic costume about these sea-tanned dike-men, or even their womenkind, or children. The archaism in dress is only

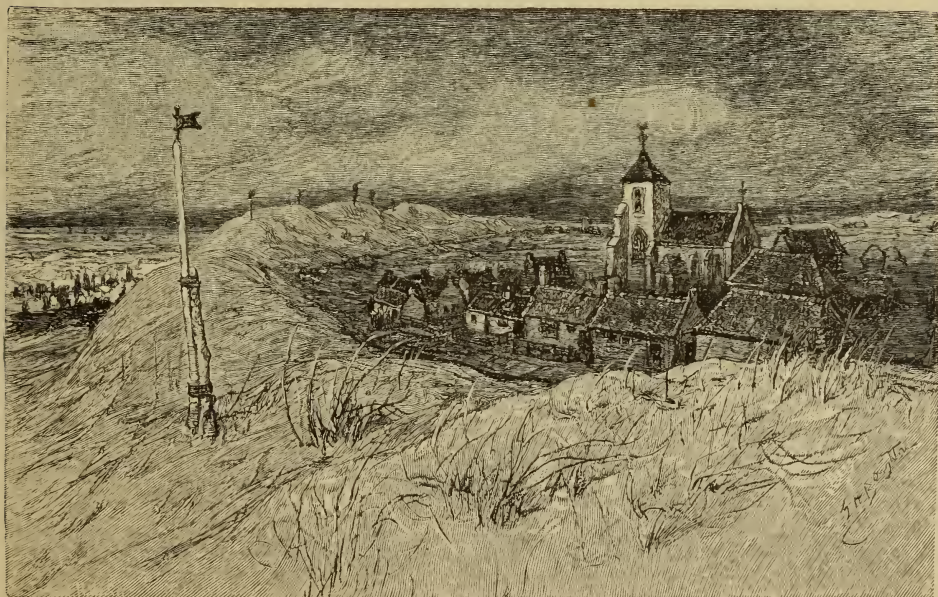


WEST KAPPEL.

among the well-to-do rustics. The road between West Kappel and Zoutland keeps more down behind the dikes, along the country roads, past farmsteads, and through grazing lands. The sheep seem to be more of the black-faced, smaller breed than one finds farther north. The villages are neat and tidy enough, but there is always a curious mixture of the fishing and farming element in them. We stopped again at Zoutland, and climbed to the top of the dunes to look about us, and sniff the sea-breeze.

Down far below us lay the village—so far that had the waters swept over the rim of sandy dike, the sea would have only reached its level when it played about the tail of the weather-cock on the gray old church-tower. There are watchers ever on the lookout, day and night, calm and storm. No wonder that the set, anxious look one sees on every face, that seems to be born with every babe, should be the only characteristic expression one remarks among the people here.

When the watchers of the dikes see danger, the alarm-bell is rung, and every soul either flies to the dikes for safety, or to help the gangs of workers to stop the threatened breach. All was calm enough at the moment, the tide was far out, and yet the village seemed much below its level. The cottage-window lights were twinkling in the gloom, as evening was just coming on. The church bell was tolling for service, and the warm glow of sunset just touched the top of its tower. Through the



VILLAGE BEHIND THE DIKES.

tall lancet windows one could see a flush of warm lamplight within. All sounds and sights were of peace and calm, and yet there somehow came upon the imagination the grim reverse of the picture: the clanging alarm-bell, the hurrying to and fro, the wild fight for safety from the mad, hungry sea. We felt deadly oppressed by the prevailing seriousness of the place. Jacob was no relief; his most cheerful theme was still fever and ague. He drew bright pictures of most enchanting regions in Holland and elsewhere, to lure me away. I must admit that the air was chill and damp as we drove home in the gloom, and that "de doo" was falling heavily, and that the sea-mist would drift past us in damp, ghostly shreds when we passed a depression in the dunes. How damp and cheerless the houses, even the best of them, looked in the soppy hollows where the lush meadows were richest! The hayricks seemed like great toadstools. There was a cold, soaked look and feel to everything. We blessed our thick ulsters, and cheered ourselves with thoughts of a good warm supper. The mention of hot supper was the only theme that brought a passing smile to Jacob's damp visage, and he translated the idea to the damp, silent driver, who translated it to the team by a liberal application of whip-lash, which soon, but not a moment too soon, brought us to the pleasant reality. "Py Chove, we are well out of dot akue," said the Faithful One, as he sat him down to the promised "fat of the land."

CHAPTER XVII.

GOES, AND ELSEWHERE.

I GOT out the last written "suggestions" of the absent one who had gone on before, and found something about a "stunning old cabinet" in a bric-à-brac shop at Goes, a few miles from Middelburg; information also anent "an antique clock, a mediæval cradle, and an archaic spinning-wheel," to be had for various "songs" in another shop down a certain street round a canal, etc. There being other enticements about Goes far beyond the bric-à-brac, we settled to go there the next day. We could drive, but it would be a long and costly affair, besides being uninteresting; better go and come back by train, for a few florins. And, as I had seen about enough of soppy farms and dripping trees to last me at least a week, I readily yielded. It had been a good, long, tiring day, and the joys and pleasures of it were in very low relief compared with the prominence of the mole-hills of discomfort, which had been damply swollen to imaginary mountains for the moment. On the bright, breezy morrow I remembered the discomforts with a certain grim pleasure, and the pleasures I could scarcely remember at all, they were so like other and better ones. As an introduction to a romantic mediæval town, a modern railway station is about the most illusion-dispelling device possible. One should enter over an ancient bridge, or under the arch of an old water-gate; anything is better than giving up the same form of ticket to be snipped by a station-master in the same dress that one finds

everywhere; and then to go up an arid, cindery road, past the toadstool growth of pot-houses and restaurants that crop up round every railway station. I was tempted to shut my eyes, and give my hand to Jacob, and say, "Lead me past all these utilities of our glorious present, to the old church in the market square, and when we are well within its portal I will look about me."

As it was, I did nothing of the kind. I had still my solemn duty towards the well-meaning fiend, who will exact, to the last dead cat in the gutter, "the things I ought to see about me." So I made mental notes of the sodden little drinking-booths, with their soppy gardens surrounded with weedy moats, the necks of broken bottles jaggling through the duck-weed and floating débris of paper bun-bags and orange-peel, besides other nameless things I did not linger to define. I saw the great modern iron building that houses a hoard of agricultural implements—mowers and threshers and reapers, adapted to steam, horse, and human power. I even went with the worldly-minded Jacob to have a nearer view of them. It was with pride that I pointed out to him that they came from the United States mostly, especially those painted a very raw blue or an eye-peeling red. We got so lost in contemplation of their limb-amputating charms that we almost left a few fingers behind in seeing how they worked. The old church and square came afterwards; as it might to the gaze of the average, modern-minded Cook's tripper, they looked out of date and paralyzed. After so many mowing-machines, I fancied myself in some back street of Chicago. It was an effort to get the proper feeling back. "Let us, then, go, Jacob, and look up the bric-à-brac. The pungent odors of must and rust that haunt the marts of the antique will put past us the newly painted smells of the patent threshers."

It was a poor, low, dingy mart of bric-à-brac that we found as the home of the wonderful cabinet. I was shy of inquiring di-

rectly for it, as that would at once enhance its value tenfold. So we threaded our way through heaps and tottering mounds of ill-made, ill-fated, for-rent-distrained-looking, modern household *disjecta membra*, smelling more of the mould and mice and black beetle of to-day than of any quality of the past. Let me not despise them entirely. How the passionate lover of "things about him" would adore the entire sordid heap!

The cabinet appearing not, we asked for cabinets in the abstract, though that was a dangerous thing to do. They had some splendid ones "at the shop;" and when the shop was reached, and the father had been brought from the tavern with the key, we were shown the wondrous cabinets. They were aged and infirm enough, and, to speak truly, devoid of much interest or value. I could hardly think that my information applied to these few ramshackle specimens. Jacob let the cat out by direct inquiry. "Yes, these were the very ones that two strange gentlemen saw the week before." And then the excitement began to increase. We had evidently been put upon the scent of these cabinets, and, naturally, they were of enormous value. The beery father was sent out by the mother to look for the more sober son, who presently came with the painfully wide-awake daughter, and the combined intelligence set itself to make the best bargain possible. It was a sad blow to find that I did not care to buy their rickety treasure, after all. Of course, they thought this a ruse on my part, to undervalue what I was dying to get. It was no easy matter to get away decently without investing in something. I could scarcely believe this commonplace affair to be the cabinet I had been advised to see. It looked more like an affair that one would be told to avoid. I asked for a description of my friends, and they told of tall, portly men, with sandy whiskers and projecting teeth, clad in suits of vivid plaid. I at once recognized the well-known caricature of

the conventional English traveller. So did Jacob, who was soon up to the merits of the situation. I should have preferred to go quietly away with a pleasant excuse, but Jacob allowed his virtuous indignation to boil over. He proceeded to denounce the beery father in round, billowy Dutch; he lectured the pale, anxious mother, and moralized to the son and daughter in good set terms. It was no easy thing to get him away. We did not seek the other bric-à-brac shop just then, preferring to let it discover itself in the course of our rambles. The church is, like most of the old churches on the islands, many times too vast for the present congregation. Whatever beauty it might have had at one time was now so "restored" out of it that it was little better than a whited sepulchre inside.

Only a part of it, as usual, was used for service. I could not help wondering if the old—very old—worshippers did not finally weary of the smell of damp whitewash. Even the limp, snuffy old sexton who showed us about did not linger very fondly over its beauties, but hastened to get it over, and possess his little coin.

There was a very rollicky sort of an antique hostelry near by. It was filled with country people; and, indeed, half the townspeople seemed to have congregated there for some festive purpose. It was not market-day, as the square was silent and deserted; all the noise and bustle of the town appeared to have been swept into this place. Jacob soon found out the reason why.

There was an auction sale going on in the ball-room, and, of all things in the world, a sale of Japanese bric-à-brac! We would see about this at once. The ball-room was a large, highly decorated salon, that also served as concert-room and theatre. There was a stage, and odds and ends of the most vivid and screaming scenery I ever beheld. The "Japaneseries" consist-

ed of the usual big jars, little cabinets, tea-sets, fans, ivories, and all the rest of it. The things were all modern, but exceedingly good. My delight with the whole scene was complete. The moving varieties of character, costume, and incident were enough to set a painter wild. It was grand to see the deep, serious interest these peasant people took in the quaint art of Japan. Of course, the art of Japan and China—over which we now rave—is to them an old story. I wondered whether this was, in some sort, a reawakening of their old interest, or a straight onward continuance. Were they beginning to regret having parted with so many of their rarest and choicest bits of old blue and crackle to the prowling stranger, or were they not at all sorry, but the contrary, and were now laying in a new stock? Anyhow, glad or sorry, there they were, delighted as children in a confectioner's shop, and buying away like fun. A Zeeland peasant in full costume, with a pair of highly decorated "Jap" jars under his arms, is a picture one does not get a chance of seeing every day. There were two old boys, with long, curly pipes, each holding a big jar in both hands for mutual inspection, disputing, comparing, and gloating over their purchases. My only regret was that I came so late, for the sale was nearly over. I could have stayed all day, and enjoyed it immensely. We had our luncheon in the noisy, smoky dining-room and billiard-room combined. It was like a picture by Brouwer, with but little change of dress. The billiard-table, to be sure, was not in his ken, but, if he could have seen the game I saw he would have painted it with delight. There were some fineish-looking old fruit-pictures hanging about, but I could not make much out of them for the smoke.

There was one noisy, funny group at a large table. A stoutish, good-natured rustic had parted with his money for about the most hideous Chinese monster that the eye of man ever saw. His young wife was in a high state of dismay and indignation.

The rest of the party were in roars of merriment, chaffing the luckless owner, who warmly defended his purchase, fondly patting the grinning brute, and even kissing it, to the howls of delight of the whole room. The great dragon-god was in the midst of the drinking-glasses on the table, and each one was having what fun there was possible out of it. It was no easy thing to take note of all these goings on without seeming to see them. They are inclined to be shy of strangers, these Zealanders, especially if they are the source of any amusement or interest that amounts to staring on the outsiders' part. I was intensely delighted, and would have given much for time or chance to sketch it, but the attempt would have scared it all away. The only thing was to look unconcerned at it all, with half-shut eyes, and chuckle inwardly. The landlord's son, who took our reckoning, told us that there was always a good sale for Japanese china in their quiet town. I wished to see the courtyard of the inn, which seemed to remind him of something of further interest. He got a special key, and led the way to an arched doorway on one side of the courtyard. I thought he was going to show us a prize calf or a fast horse or a fat pig—not at all. He stopped, and drew our attention to a large, half-fallen tree, propped tenderly and carefully up from complete prostration. Where the trunk was rotted away there were coverings of zinc to stay further harm. "It is very old," Jacob said. That was very evident. "Some four or five hundred years," our guide and showman remarked, and also that it was a mulberry-tree.

Then it all came to me—this must be the famous tree of "Jacqueline of Bavaria." "Yes, yes!" and they both seemed delighted and puzzled that I should know anything about their local saint. I did not attempt to cut my name anywhere about, nor break off a few branches, or do any other damage to express my pleasure at meeting with this cherished relic. I

satisfied myself with a good, long look about me, noting that all—the locked enclosure and the care given to its preservation—evinced a healthy survival of the spirit of romance in this seemingly serious and matter-of-fact people. The old hostelry having made us partly forget the steam “shuckers,” we were now in better mood with the other antiquities of the town. There are many quaint old houses here, but none so good as at Middelburg. There is a queer little house near the fish-market, with a big gold mermaid for a weathercock, that is rather amusing. The shipping in the docks and the distant river craft were well worth the attention of the sketcher. We were passing a row of very old almshouses, with carved gateway, showing figures in sixteenth-century costume. Venturing in the courtyard to look about us, we noticed an old well with rather an insisted-on inscription in staring letters.

“What does it say, Jacob?”

“It say dot dis well-water is not so very goot, dot you petter pe careful how you trink him.”

“That’s curious.”

“Not at all. Much petter warn de beeples, den dey don’t get ill. Now here is another” (and, sure enough, this pump was placarded even more prominently than the well); “dis pump she zay dot you must not trink de water at all; she is only fit to wash de floors wiz.”

Jacob was not content; he must satisfy himself and me by finding out all about it. So, boldly knocking at one of the doors, he inquired of the quaint old black-and-white-clad crone who came out all about the water. She gave the well and pump a shocking character, and said that they had to get all their drinking water from afar, etc., and presently asked us in to see her little abode. In a few minutes we were as chatty and as much at home as if we were paying a long-expected

afternoon call. It was an almshouse for old ladies in reduced circumstances. It was about three hundred and fifty years old or so. They had to pay a very small sum for maintenance; it was not entirely a charity; there was much liberty of coming and going, etc. She was not entirely alone in the world, but had one son, a sailor, which accounted for the whales' teeth carvings and the bits of strange pottery. I think Jacob managed to find out some people she knew, and to know them also—anyhow, we soon got on most friendly terms. She would insist on our having some tea, which rite and ceremony was duly performed, as it always is in Holland, with much warmth and cordiality. Meanwhile, the fact of the old lady having strange visitors to tea spread rapidly over the institution. First of all a small child came to the door and looked in, and then a little girl came for the child and lingered long with wide-eyed interest, and then the child was suddenly dragged away, and in a few minutes there seemed to be a procession gradually forming of all the old women in the place. They first of all sauntered carelessly by, staring in very hard, and then one, more bold, stopped to ask some needless question, and all the others closed in about the door to hear the reply. Our ancient dame was not to be imposed upon with indiscreet interest in us—or our tea. So she soon, very soon, sent the party about their affairs, and shut the door. We finished our afternoon call in peace, and pleasant and queer it all was. The old lady was really loath to take the silver Jacob tendered on my part, to get more tea for us some time. In fact she would not take it. Jacob was obliged to put it in the spare teapot on the mantelshelf.

We had a good hour to spare at the railway station, having, through lingering over our tea, missed our train. It was no unlucky miss for me, however. We took a favorable table in the



SUNDAY MORNING IN ZEELAND.

little coffee-room, and ordered up simple refreshments which we did not need, so as to keep the place, and there I sketched right and left—all comers, gentle and simple—willy-willy. The buxom waiter-girl, fresh from the country, and brave in big gold pendant and necklace, and bristling with tremendous corkscrews and dangling squares of gold by the side of each wicked brown eye, Jacob would detain her over the change—over the endless questions and banter he knew so well how to employ, while I plied the flying pencil as hard as I possibly could. She did not like it at all at first, but gradually grew to resent it less and less, until finally I thought I never saw a more willing victim. She was rather joked by the severe, unpicturesque, middle-aged lady behind the bar, until she showed her the goodly silver disk that Jacob rewarded her with in compliance with my sign to him. Jacob enjoyed this paying out for me; it gave him a certain lordly air, as if he had me in his retinue at so much a month. He enjoyed the day so much, in fact, that he quite forgot about the dangers of the dread ague. “To-morrow we will go to Katwyck-by-the-Sea, Jacob; there is no ague there; so, ‘if you’re waking, call me early.’” The Faithful knew not his “May Queen,” and only answered, “Oh, you petter let me yoost look out de drain first in my ‘dime-daple.’”

CHAPTER XVIII.

KATWYCK-WITHOUT.

THE Hague is always an excellent "foothold" or starting-point for many places of interest lying thereabout, both landward and seaward. In itself it is one of the most charming of all the towns in the Low Countries. It has all the fresh, brisk air of a seaport, without quite so many of the serious and substantial odors of harbor mud at low tide that one gets so often in a seaport town.

There is also a quaint, genial air of court gentility still lingering about its many palatial residences. It is easy to see that at one time its dream, its ideal, was Versailles. Not any vain attempt to outshine its queenly splendors is evident; but over much that remains of the best part of the Hague of the eighteenth century—which is a very prominent part indeed—there is a light, flourisby, courtly touch that takes one back to the time of powdered wigs, of patches deftly placed near dimples and at outer corners of roguish eyes, of jewelled snuff-boxes and sedan-chairs, and the loftiest of high-heeled brocade shoes. Let us not sigh very deeply over that departed age. It was a pretty age; but perhaps it is as well for us all that Du Barry and Pompadour took most of its odor of musk and stilted wickedness away with them. Let me not be understood to say that this Versailles influence extends over all the Hague. There is much that is modern and Parisian. There is also a good fair bit that was built when the Dutch had an architect-

ure of their own, when they were making glorious chapters of history, when their flags were flying in every clime, and they were good hard hitters by sea and land.

The vague, excitement-hunting, mere sight-seeing tourist would "do" the Hague and all about it in a good long heart-breaking day, and forget all about it before the next morning, and be ready again for just such another dose; but to those who have the least interest in matters of Dutch history, in its art, in its past, or in its picturesque, prosperous present, the Hague is a place that could pleasantly detain one a week or more. Even the artist, working at Scheveningen, can perhaps live cheaper and more pleasantly at the Hague, only a few minutes off by tram. Scheveningen is all very well when one has a "purpose," and is indifferent to expense and discomfort in search of this one idea; but if the sketcher wishes to exist in quiet and comparative economy, or even if he wishes his money's worth of luxury, the Hague itself is the best place to stay at. At least, such is my experience. Not far from Scheveningen, by the coast—six miles perhaps—is Katwyck, the smaller sister fisher village, and growing up to be a fashionable sea-side resort, and putting on all the airs (of gorged and bewildered drainage, among others) of the elder place. Wishing to see all the Dutch sea-side resorts that could be reached with comfort, an early day at Katwyck was planned. The quickest, cheapest, and easiest way to get there from the Hague was by rail to Leyden, and then by tram a couple of miles or so. This, however, was much too easy and popular for us; we must needs do something difficult and roundabout, in order to be out of the common. Taking the tram to Scheveningen, and another good look at the mass of saline picturesqueness thereabout, for purposes of comparison, seemed an idea; anyhow, we did it, and also a sketch or two "while handy by." Jacob was then sent in



KATWYCK.

quest of a trap to drive us on to Katwyck along the coast road. In an evil moment, however, came another idea to Jacob. Why not go by the Prince's Wood? it was a little farther, but it was through such a lovely, shady park, and it would be a relief after so much sea and town, and all the rest of it. Good! the Prince's Wood be it. A park or a wood or a straggling, scrubby forest is considered a great treat always in Holland. The trap was soon at hand, with a serious, sad-eyed driver and a hangdog, fly-tormented horse. The trap was an archaic shandrydan, blistered and corroded by the wild elements, as far as paint and iron-work were concerned, but newly upholstered with the shiniest, slipperiest, and stickiest American oil cloth of a gory hue. The only effective thing about the whole turnout

was the whip, and I noticed this, as the driver took occasion to tie on a cruel-looking "snapper" before we started. The Prince's Wood, I am bound to say, had a cool and soothing effect after the glare of the white sand and white cottages; but as we wended our way under the dense over-branching boughs the air began to strike more and more chill, and the odor of the thick mat of rotting leaves all about became more pungent and wearisome. I began to long for the free air again. The little openings where the sparse sunshine could sift through the thick pall got less and less frequent. Jacob tried to entertain me with stories of this good prince, whose towering ambition it was to make this long, dense avenue of shade as a sort of atonement for many little mistakes of his lifetime. There is a healthy kind of superstition among the Dutch (other good people have it too), that plentiful tree-planting covereth a fair amount of sins. I only know that I never once, under the dank infliction of that long, depressing grove, breathed a scrap of gratitude to the memory of that well-meaning prince. Here and there along the dreary way were pools of rank water—well meant for lakelets, perhaps, at one time; but now the lush scum of duck-weed mantled them o'er, and fat frogs, as they "plopped" headlong beneath the mottled, leaf-strewn surface, seemed to be the only things of life about the joyous scene.

Jacob was looking about as yellow as a quarantine flag, so I talked with him on the cheering theme of ague, thinking to inspire in him a wholesome impulse to get out into the open again as soon as possible. There was no other road, and we were half-way or more, and, altogether, "returning were as tedious as go o'er." It was a blessed relief to come to a quiet, sleepy village, with a neat little inn, fair in the warm sunlight. The horse was rested, and we were cheered and comforted by

a lunch, frugal, indeed, but which seemed a regal and opulent repast in that solitude. There was more Prince's Wood still to do, but, luckily, there was at this point a choice of roads. I need not say that we chose the other way around. It was only half shaded; the dense trees followed us on one side with their chill shadows and their acrid, autumnal odors, but overhead was the fair sky; and on the other hand we could see, stretching far away over the interminable net-work of little, rush-fringed watercourses cutting about the broad emerald meadows, the high, grassy dikes that kept back the brown waves of the North Sea. We could see the flapping pennons of the fisher-boats on the strand, and we could scent from afar the air tingling with ozone. The saline whiffs got stronger, and, even when mingled with dashes of peat-reek and tarry smoke from boat-menders' fires, with a few pungent fish-curing odors blended artfully now and then, it was fragrant perfume after the grave-like damps of that depressing grove. Katwyck has the same exhilarating air and movement as Scheveningen. One is lifted over its breezy dunes as if with winged feet. There is a mad impulse to catch one of the tanned fish-girls around her ample waist, and have a wild, careering waltz across the level sands. I never heard of any stranger yielding to this mad fancy, however. The ruddy fish-girl has a sturdy arm, as well as a powerful and protecting odor of kipper. It is quite dangerous enough to sketch them; for, besides being of a skit-tish nature themselves, their tarry men folk are morbidly jealous of them. Jacob bore the brunt of my sketching encounters with them. He was getting very knowing in such matters. I had only to give him a significant glance, and he would draw off the victims into sweet converse; and at a nice, quiet distance I, making believe to sketch the remote ocean, would "book" them with greatest ease. I used to call him the "decoy duck,"

and he rather enjoyed it. Katwyck is much more quiet and retired than her neighbor, while, for artistic purposes, I think it has many other advantages. There is more variety of landscape line all about it, and quite near lies the village of Katwyck-Within, full of picturesque material. In fact, I found it of more interest to me than Katwyck-on-Sea. Jacob began to remind me that we must not linger too long, as there was the return drive to Scheveningen. Wild horses would not have got me home by way of that dank Prince's Wood again. So I sang blithely, to the Faithful One's astonishment,

"We will kick the sad driver, and let him go free,
And sing *hey* for the bonnets of Bonny Dundee!"

"You must pay him for his back journey all de same," suggested the literal-minded Jacob.

"With all the joy imaginable, so long as he take me not with him."

We had a good two or three more hours to stay by that little arrangement, and then we could return by train and take Katwyck-Within and Leyden on our way. Owing to the lateness of the season, there were but very few visitors about. We had the entire place pretty much to ourselves. We could have had every wild excitement they knew of, at a moment's notice. We could have boated, and fished, and bathed, and had our photographs taken, and bowled, and swung, ridden donkeys, and bought out the entire bazaar, if we had been so minded. There were a few other stray birds of passage, like ourselves, wandering about just for the day, but the gay life of the place was gone; the fisher people were shaking off the demoralizing effects of mixing with fashionable society, and were settling down to the serious problem of getting through the winter. The "Grand Hotel" of the place had housed its wilderness of

wooden chairs and little, round-topped tables. The music pavilion was closed, and the band scattered its wild blasts no longer on the breeze. One solitary hand-organ alone survived of all that had made Katwyck "Wagnerian" and chaotic. The *mondaines* and *demi-dittoes* had gone back to their off-season haunts. The free sea-winds had blown away the last faint scents of patchouli, and the sand had drifted over the retreating impressions of the last pair of high-heeled Paris boots. I, for one, did not say "Alas!" as I was rather glad of it. The vast hotel itself looked rather well conducted and well ventilated. Perhaps inclined to "scenes of revelry by night," when the season was well in swing, it was quiet enough at that moment. I could have had any six of the pumped-out-looking waiters to wait on us at our lone dinner, which we ordered to give the place a trial—scarcely a fair test, for, no doubt, the cook was as weary as the waiters of feeding the multitude. Those who know the Dutch sea-side resorts in their season seem to like them better than the Belgian places, even better than many on the French coast. There is this advantage in those I saw, that there are few of them near harbors and antique beds of sewage deposit. Comforts, as we understand the word, are better cared for, too. "And they are dear, but not so dear." "And they are far, but not so far."

At any rate, for those who are fond of change of scene, and really pure, bright, fresh air, combined with picturesqueness all about, I feel almost certain that some of the places on the Dutch coast would be a pleasant experience. Heaven forefend that I should advise anybody to go anywhere! Experiences differ so much. One man's pleasant lines may become the very unpleasant snarl of another. And there be such hosts of trivial travellers who never have the wit to look back on little scenes and experiences of temporary discomfort with any

degree of delight in after-days. They take their own inborn dulness to a place, and then charge the people with want of interest. In fancying such people in Holland, I always think of the lines in "The Walrus and the Carpenter:"

"They wept like anything to see such quantities of sand—
If it were shovelled all away, they said, *it would be grand.*"

The tram ride between Katwyck and Leyden was a pleasant little run. It was a relief to have it as a change. I thought of that sad, slow driver wending his melancholy way through that creepy, sullen wood, that *Fôret sans Pitié*, again. We were rather a merry party on the tram. Some Leyden students had been taking a few friends to the sea, and they had evidently improved the occasion by appropriate libations to Neptune and Aphrodite in bumpers of "the rosy." They sang—uproariously they sang—and the song of the Dutch student is no feeble pipe. The platform of the tram was rather a nice place to stand, and even to sketch a few flying forms from. We lingered for a few minutes at Katwyck-Within, and I could see that the place was rich in material for the painter. Mentally resolving to return on the morrow, I began at once to sketch a much-bepatched native. With every chance to have ruined himself by howling discords of color, in the variety he had about him, I could not help regarding him as a harmonious success. His garments would have been a study of tone. He was a living, loafing symphony in browns and grays. Even his ruddy, bronze face and his warm, sandy hair were in perfect harmony with his clothes. His position was so comfortable to him, with his hands jammed well down his deep pockets, that he did not budge until I had booked him; and then, just as the car went rattling off, I cut the leaf from the solid block to put it in the sketch-book pocket. Away it went with a puff

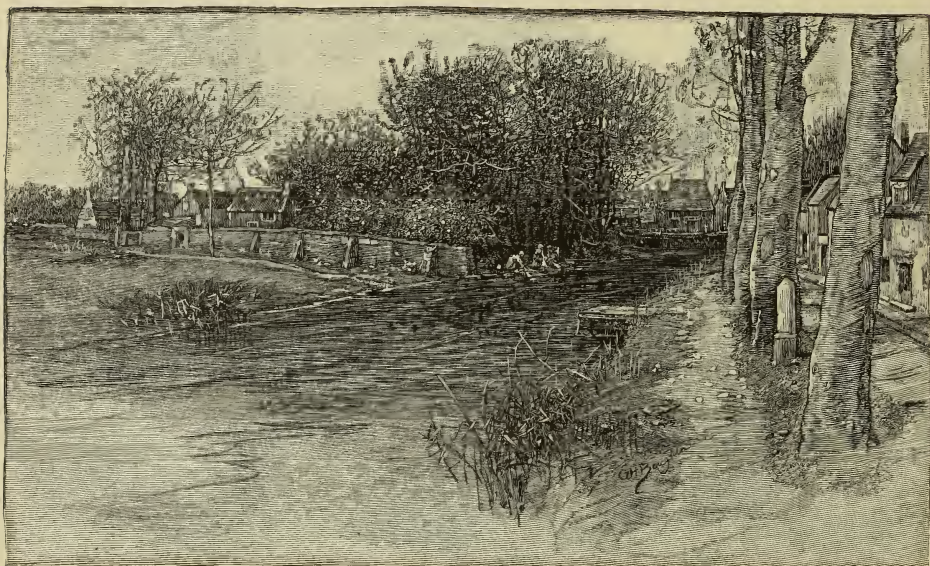
of wind. He saw the flying leaf coming towards him, and, quicker than I thought he could, under any circumstances, move, he caught it, and ran after the car to give it to me. He soon saw that it was himself that he was bringing. He must have counted the patches, as the likeness was not elaborate. He trotted beside the car for some distance, roaring with glee at his "take off." He was joined by two or three other loafers, who also laughed. There was a slight chance of its coming to grief in the tussle among them to all see it at once. However, I finally got it safely back, and the good-natured original acquired some coin, that seemed to delight him even more than his sketch.

CHAPTER XIX.

KATWYCK-WITHIN.

THE next day we returned to Katwyck-Within, and found it even better than it had promised from the tram platform the day before. There is a widish river running through the village. On one side is a tree-shaded promenade, with quaint old residences standing back from the road, behind garden walls. On the other side of the stream are red-roofed cottages with little gardens and orchards, and brick walls that slope down to the water's edge. There were women busy washing at the brink, beating the clothes, with many a noisy spat of their flat paddles, the rattling clack of their merry chatter and laughter keeping time. Children were playing in the boats with their own tiny craft—generally the toy boat would be one of their own wooden shoes, or *klumpen*, with a little stick stuck through a paper sail. The whole scene was full of ever-changing bits of form and color. It was not so enticing to sketch as it was to watch it. There was a stalwart young woman hanging clothes on a line, and every movement was that of rugged grace and strength. She might have inspired a wholesome-minded, realistic sculptor with many of her unconscious poses. I watched her every movement until she exhausted her basket, and then I waited for her to come again. The river was not very wide, and I could see perfectly, and—what was only natural—I could *be* seen in my watching; and then began a skirmishing fire of such light “chaff” as the sisterhood who wash

their own and other people's soiled linen in public know how to indulge in. Poor Jacob, who could understand it, for his sins, was fain to blush at times. He fairly chuckled and gurgled with enjoyment over some of the richly seasoned jokes they pelted us with. When my statuesque hanger-out returned to her work with a fresh basket, she was made aware of her being sketched. It made all the difference in the world. She was



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conscious and restrained, and not over-pleased. The rural policeman then favored us with his society, as a change. The line of washers screamed with delight at first, as it seemed quite on the cards that we might be led off in custody. He had no such idea, however, that big, mild functionary. When he saw the sketching, the latent art instinct of his nature was awakened. He would gladly have sat with us, and even protected us from gibe all the afternoon, if I had only gone on with drawing the



AS WE SKETCHED HER.

women at their washing. He and Jacob soon struck upon a chord of mutual sympathy. Jacob must have discovered, as usual, that they were distant relations, in some way. They fed each other on snuff, and sneezed and snorted in grand concert. It was like oil on the waters, this fraternity between them. The washers turned to other matters of nearer interest, and my "hanger-out" came back to the attitudes of simple unconsciousness again. The policeman told us of a good place to lunch, not at the inn—that would be too dear—but at the grocer's, in a quiet, friendly way. I did not care for this idea at first, but there was the charm of novelty about it, after all. It was so long since I had gone to a village grocer's for lunch, that I wished to renew my impressions. Having secured us for his friend, the policeman moved off, and I firmly believe he was good enough to advise the grocer of our coming. There was a beam of welcome on his face that could never have been purely spontaneous. We were soon seated in his own little back parlor, and through the open door leading into the snuggest and brightest little Dutch kitchen we could presently hear the sizzling of our cutlets. There was a welcome odor with the frying, as it helped to neutralize a powerful fragrance of crude petroleum that filled the place.

In Holland they simply revel in all the varieties of things that can be made from that wonderful but penetrating and pungent article. I think the fire was made from it; the knives and forks were cleaned with it. The grocer himself had taken some of it for his cold, and the apprentice, who was also waiter, had copiously anointed his shiny head with it. They don't seek to disguise it in Katwyck with the pretty name of Vaseline, but they take it as it is, and love it for itself. I thought at one time of leaving the scene of novelty, with whatever other charms might be in store for us, and going off to the inn. But that would be

a confession of tenderness of the "oil-factory" nerves, as the old lady said. So, looking only on the bright and shiny side of the scene, I waited for further delights. The petroleum made no difference to Jacob; I doubt if he smelled it at all. It was a favorite theme of his in conversation. If he could introduce it once, it was as hard to get rid of as its clinging flavor. Petroleum stores were favorite objects in nature with him; he always pointed them out to me with great relish, until I positively forbade him to do it any more. He would even then forget himself sometimes, and begin with a flourish: "Do you zee dose large building wiz de helevators on de outzide?" "Yes; well, go on." He would then remember. "Oh, well—never mind. No; I dinks she is not de houze I mean. I 'spects dot is only one of dose petdroleum sdores." He would thus manage to point it out, after all, without appearing to. Now, I was wondering how he enjoyed the full blast of the article that wreathed about us on every side. We opened the window giving on the street. This was a relief and an amusement. The friendly policeman came and stood outside, and took a lively interest in our repast when it came; he even suggested a salad which the old grocer was famous for. I declined for various reasons, principally because I felt sure that it would be mixed with vaseline and vinegar. The policeman called our attention particularly to the pepper, as being the best he ever tasted. He was evidently bent on our making a good meal of it, as we never dusted on enough to please him. Jacob told him that we would offer him beer, but dare not while on duty. He said nothing, but looked sad and thoughtful. The policeman was joined by several other worthy citizens, who stayed by until the repast was over. A small but ribald boy, however, who wished to while away a fragment of his spare time at our window, was sent off about his not very urgent business promptly by our friendly protector.

After all, it was some fun. I know several simple natures who would have enjoyed it with me enormously.

We then bade adieu to our fragrant grocery, to our confiding policeman, to our string of washers, still laving their linen in the sudsy stream, getting a few parting shots of chaff from them as we went by. It was all in fun, and the ringing chorus of laughter that went up showed that the joke struck them, though we went lightly by, unscathed. It is a grand thing not to understand too much of a tongue—even of that of a Dutch laundress. The tram soon took us up and well out of range, towards Leyden. It was a relief not to have to bother one's self about train connections. I rarely looked at the time-table, or reminded the Faithful One to do so. He had a small, thin time-table in his wide waistcoat pocket that seemed to avail him for any combination of boat, rail, or coach. I, however, noticed this time that he consulted it rather nervously, and glared at it as if he had caught it playing him false. "We be late—we miss de dable d'ôte if we don't look out. Dere won't be any more train till nine o'clock. We are two minutes late now, and dere is five minutes more to de station. I also must get dickets—um." I knew the ways of Dutch railways, and had hope. Just as we got to the very gates of the station we saw the train meander gently off, waving us whiffs of unsavory steam, and tooting a sad farewell. Jacob sat him down and roundly cursed the entire railway system of the Low Countries in good, rattling Dutch, for being so unreliable.

"That will do for the present, Jacob; we will now go and order dinner, and try to be cheerful." The hotel we selected for this repast seemed a nice, pretentious kind of place, with a great gilded effigy of some heraldic beast—bear, cow, or lion, I forget which—over its door. The table d'hôte was nearly over—would we wait and have a separate dinner? We would,

and as simple as possible. Good! Say at half-past seven? We said half-past seven, and then we went out and killed time by looking at the shops, and sniffing at the pungent canals, sending up their evening odors. Jacob pointed out the scene of a famous explosion, where a canal barge loaded with gunpowder "went off," and wrecked a goodly part of the town. The Faithful One then proceeded to "word-paint" the harrowing scene with an attention to minute detail that would have made the fortune of a sensational reporter. As I gathered, he once knew a man who had seen some one who heard it all from an eye-witness. It was awful enough; but, for all that, I thought it bad tact in Jacob to try and sadden a very pleasant moment by recalling such very unpleasant incidents. It was time to take him back to the sign of the Golden Beast, and dinner. The last echoes of the wild laughter following some jovial story of the late table d'hôte's were still in the air as we turned in to the dining-room. There was a long wait for our soup, and then an interminable and painful interruption of all communication with the food supply. We rang timidly, and then wildly. Finally, there came to us the angry *garçon*, who, in good, set terms, wished to know when we supposed they, the waiters, were to dine, if they were to be disturbed by us in this way? Naturally, neither Jacob, old stager as he is, nor I, moderate "globe-trotter," had ever reasoned this out before—it had never thus been forced home upon us. So, as this pertinent question had taken in some way the form of a conundrum, we gave it up, and went to ask the solution of the landlord. He, good soul! had dined (to speak kindly of him), and was disposed to side with his head waiter; whereupon Jacob proceeded to let him know with whom he was trifling. I would be about the very last illustrious stranger, fresh from Brazil, that he would ever bring to his effete old hostelry, etc. This awful threat

ON THE DIKES.



seemed to work wonders, and the waiter was called down and most thoroughly "slated" for his insolence. It was no use, however, for that truculent menial to announce that the fish was then waiting for us—it was nearly time for our train. Jacob called various Dutch deities to witness that this was to be the last time he would ever darken the door-sill of the Golden Beast, and off we went, Jacob heaping fuel on his anger, and I wickedly fanning the flame.

It was all I could do next day to get Jacob back to Leyden. The whole place—university and all (that never did him harm, nor good, I may safely say), came under his malediction. I reminded him that last year we tried to see the museum of the Clothworkers' Company, and failed on account of the place being closed for the annual cleaning, and how the old housekeeper had "answered" him when he reproved her for always cleaning the place when he brought illustrious strangers to see it. It was enough; we would return to the charge, and if that (something in Dutch) old person tried to put us off again, she would hear portions of her family history that she would not care for. It seems a sad pity to go blindly past the manifold claims of a fine old town like Leyden—rich in deeds that live in history, rich in fine monuments of the past, rich in museums and public buildings, rich in fragrant canals—to follow this little war of our worthy factotum with the stout little old lady of the Clothworkers' Hall. Perhaps it is the wish to "word-paint" that which I myself do know—"the things I see about me," as the realistic mentors say—that may, after all, account for it. Leyden is, no doubt, rather interesting in many ways. There are some curious mural decorations up the staircase walls of the university, evidently executed by some mad-brained students, stimulated with the sacred fire-water, rather than the divine fire. There is in that same university, also, when you

pass the decorated wall, a fine old council-chamber, where the students, on that awful day of the Exam, are weighed in the balance. There is a grand old semicircular table covered with solemn green baize, and charged with heavy leaden ink-stands bristling with savage "goose-quills." High-backed, dogged-looking chairs are ranged behind the table, and about the walls are bookcases filled with staggering vellum-backed volumes, bursting with damning evidence against the stammering and perspiring victim. All around over the books are grim, fierce portraits of dons and big-wigs, long since gone to undergo their own Exam, but still seeming ever to be there in spirit, ever to join the grim jury on that safe inside curve of the ink-spotted horseshoe table when the joyful ordeal day comes round. There is also a museum, of a severe and classic kind, where there is nothing more frivolous than flint arrow-heads, or more glowing with color than a mummy case. The "remains"—Roman, Greek, Assyrian, prehistoric, etc.—are like most such. The "specimens"—botany, geology, natural history, etc.—are meant to cheer rather than to inebriate. It is a good collection, a child more of the British Museum race than of the South Kensington family. It is the kind of museum where they would welcome a new fossil prawn with bray of trumpets, and hang South Sea Island war-clubs on a background of old Flemish tapestry, not out of any ill-feeling towards the tapestry, but simply to let it feel that it lacked severity, repose, and educational purpose. The Clothworkers' Guild museum is more picturesque, and even romantic. It is the home of those dear old odds and ends of bygone days that we all know so well by the much-abused term of "bric-à-brac." It is not extensive, but deeply interesting to the lover of such treasures. There are some good old pictures, mostly guild portraits, severe, sincere, and valuable to the student of character.

Jacob was somewhat disconcerted to find there was no need of the *obus* that he intended to explode in the event of again being denied admission. He went up and down the dim galleries, charged with carefully prepared indignation, and had no one to vent it on. Even the train kindly waited over-time that took us back to the Hague, so the Dutch railway system escaped its usual blessing.



CHAPTER XX.

OUDEWATER.

THE Faithful One had often tried to arouse in me an interest in a certain sleepy old town called Oudewater—personally dear to him from tender associations. “It wos dere I go for my onnymoon. Heer Gott, wot larks we ’ave!” He did say how many years ago, but I forget. However, this particular Sunday was the anniversary of that larky event.

“Suppose, then, we go to Oudewater on a little modest celebration of the happy day? Would that suit you, Jacob?” It suited us both so well that in ten minutes we were on our way to the station. The idea was to take the train to Gouda, and then get a trap to drive in the rest of the way. From the Hague to Gouda—even under the softening effects of a golden scumble of October haze—the scenery was not of a kind to be cheered or gilded into the slightest interest. It had the flat, endless, monotonous repetitions of a common pattern on a roll of cheap wall-paper. Lines of toy-like windmills at even distances, rows of spindly poplars, all out of the same toy-box, speckless little white cottages, so many to the mile, and even the cows and geese were littered carefully about in exact ratio to the other pretty little things.

The little ditches were as straight as the ruled lines on a sheet of writing-paper. It was so very odd that I could not help jotting down some of the more rigid patterns of the land-

scape as they unrolled before our window. With the exception of a few wayside stations, there was not a break in the "design" until we reached Gouda. As we decided to defer our look at this place until our return from Oudewater, Jacob was sent in quest of a nice open trap. I could amuse myself on the old bridge until he came. He gave me a good long wait, and finally came upon the scene with a neat, new, highly varnished, little close brougham. Seeing my look of dismay, he proceeded to explain. It was Sunday, it was a fine day, and every other thing was let. "Never mind, Jacob; this is your own celebration; so you shall go in proper style." I shot him in, and closed the door on him, and mounted up beside the coachman. There was no end of protesting on Jacob's part, but he finally accepted the position cheerfully, and I hope he enjoyed it. The driver was deeply amused at the move, which puzzled him fearfully as well; but we soon forgot all about Jacob in his tank, and launched out into a very mixed and dislocated conversation. He would try bad English on me, and I would pay him back in worse Dutch; and when our talk got hopelessly involved, Jacob would kindly lean out of the carriage window and unpick the conversational tangle.

The road ran most of the way on the top of a high dike, and beside the road and dike ran a placid little stream, that was now a river, now a canal, now a mill-pond; or it would lose itself in great pools and marshes among sandy flats, and then pull itself into a stream-like shape again, and go on as before, first one side of the dike and then the other, in the most wayward and un-Dutch-like manner. There were constant changes of the character of the scenery about it—funny little ferries now and then, and quaint little boats and bridges. There were plenty of characteristic figures, too, lolling over the bridges, smoking and chatting to other picturesque but podgy figures in the boats; curly

blue smoke, too, everywhere—peat reek from the red chimneys of the fat and placid farmsteads nestled away among the apple and cherry trees, wreaths and puffs of pungent fat cigars from the idling figures.

It seemed a plodding, happy land on every side, where it was nearly always Sunday or fête-day afternoon. Rich, succulent fields of pasturage, where the drowsiest and sleekest cows and the fleeci-est of pink-eyed sheep fairly waded about in the cloying grasses. The grain-ricks seemed bursting with fulness, the orchards were laden down with apples, rosy, golden, and russet, and the air was filled with their fragrance. Great, rich, mellow pears were bearing down the looped branches of the long avenues of espaliers. Every inch of the "well-larded earth" seemed to be under the most loving and elaborate cultivation. Small wonder that the farmhouses looked pictures of home contentment; that the porches and arbors were overrun with vine and flower; that the garden paths were lined out with great splashes of color, in masses of dahlia and hollyhock and aster; that the great brass door-knockers and the gilded weathercocks filled the sunshine with tinges of glinting gold. The apples had their rosy hues repeated in the ripe, pippin-like cheeks of the tow-headed children rolling about in the orchards, and the glints of gold were reflected back from the massive ornaments of the Sunday-clad people at every turn, so that there was no lack of opulent, Rubens-like color to gladden the soul of the lover of a full, rich picture. Although the men, as a rule, were arrayed in shiny black "store clothes," they compensated nobly to the general color scheme by wearing such startling scarfs of arsenic, "Magenta," and "Solferino" hues, singly and in combination, that their massive rings and pins paled into half-tones beside them. The womenkind did not, either, put on much "blare" of color in their dress material. The correct form seemed ampli-



VEGETABLE GIRL.

tude—skirt on skirt, “until it took the shape, fold after fold, of mountain” and of minor haystack. I have seen other women-folk of Holland who made rather a parade of their wealth of piled-on petticoats, but I fancy the best of them would have felt somewhat slim and poor beside these rotund maids and matrons. What airing of fine Brussels lace, too, on gold-bedizened cap, on gold-bangled sleeve, and jewel-clasped collar and frill! “And some had got rings upon every finger, and on some fingers they had got three,” like Lord Bateman’s bride. There was color enough, too, of the positive and eye-searing sort, in cap-strings and pinner. And how they seemed to enjoy their own and each other’s magnificence of attire and ample spread of sail and beam! wandering about hand in hand, champing the rosy apple, or absorbing the melting pear. It seemed a vale of health, too, as well as wealth; nowhere else had I seen such brilliant, fresh complexions, such cheeks of peach (and peony) and cream, such bright, gleaming, kindly eyes. They had not the hale, bronzed, kippered look of the sea-side Dutch, but they were seemingly just as strong and hearty. It was our driver’s own province, and he was delighted with our rather frank and free admiration of his fair countrywomen. Whenever we saw a particularly interesting group by the wayside, we would pull up and make “inquiries.” The artful Jacob would lean out of his window and lure them into a rigmarole of sweet converse, and so give me a chance to note down all I wished at my leisure. We passed through several spick-and-clean villages—one down by the water-side, with some very good sketching about it, I should say. I could have told more about it if it had not been for our driver’s consuming vanity. He loved to rattle furiously over the little cobble-paved streets, with much too much crack of whip, and effort to witch the gaping rustics with noble drivership. It was only a fleeting vision of neat little brick houses, with gleaming win-

dows, and doors polished like coach panels, and curly iron-work in the shape of dates and monograms embellishing the gable fronts, sloping cellar doors to most of them, where the happy, round urchins could slide down all day long; speckless pavements of mottled brick, laid herring-bone-wise; a glimpse only of a tobacconist's shop, with priceless old Delft and Japan jars for the holding of snuff, in the window; then past a little chemist's, with a golden mortar and pestle outside as a sign, and another big golden-looking one, with scales and weights of the same burnished metal, and more jars containing spices from the Indies, inside the shop; pendent bunches of dried herbs hung from the ceiling. We went by at a reckless gait, but the eye of the campaigning sketcher is accustomed to getting all it can from the fleeting visions about him. By the way, too, the Dutch apothecary shop is not at all an alluring thing to the insatiable tippler of patent medicines. They rarely do more than make up prescriptions after the Dutch formula, and only possible to the hardy Dutch constitution. There are neither the "Resurrection," nor the "Old Rye," nor the "Old Stingo Bitters," nor "Gubbins's Cordial," nor "Bunkum's Corpse Reviver," nor any of the alluring tipples of other civilizations. Even the mild pellets and tinctures of Homœopathy are not to be had (outside of a shop or two in the big cities) for love or money.

We soon got through that small "dorp" at the lively pace we were displaying. Scared mothers ran out and rescued wandering babes, and blessed us both loud and deep; dogs flew after us; chickens, ducks, and geese flew cackling before us. But, for all our whip-snapping and prancing and dust, I don't fancy we made much impression on the groups of sleek, stolid villagers, who, with rich green cigars, and hands deep in pockets, smoked calmly and grinned broadly—that sort of expan-

sive, many-sided smile that may be complimentary, or it may not, so wanting is it in decision of character.

Our Flying Dutchman settled down to a calm trot the moment we struck the soft high-road again. My command of the language was not equal to telling the driver that I should much prefer going slowly through the villages, and then tearing along the road afterwards, if it was all the same to him. He thought I was praising his speed through the "dorp," until I got Jacob's head out of the window, and made him translate. It then transpired that the "fleeting show" was entirely an idea of the very clever horse. It had always been indulged in a rattle and tear over the cobbles in villages; it needed no urging on the driver's part; all the elaborate exhibit of whip-cracking was a mere detail. We were invited to watch him when he came near another village, and, sure enough, without word or whip, as soon as we struck the cobbles of the next "dorp," off went our steed with a bound, and it was all our driver could do to hold him in. We found that he didn't mind stopping altogether, if that was required of him, as much as we liked, but if he was to go, it meant a stylish gait. So we did stop him, and Jacob and I got down and walked, while the playful steed careered through the streets, and waited afterwards for us, at the end of his "spurt," on the high-road. On again, with passing pictures of gluttoned prosperity on either hand; in fact, I was getting rather tired of apple-trees sagging down with fruit, of gorged granaries, and bloated contentment. There ought to have been just a few beggars about, and a little picturesque squalor here and there, if only for mere artistic contrast of light and shade. We reached Oudewater just in time to order lunch and to take a preliminary stroll while it was being prepared. I naturally expected a choice *menu* in the very centre of that land of plenty. Not a bit of it! Our choice at the choice inn

was the choice of Hobson—the inevitable veal steak, fried potatoes, pickled cabbage, and Dutch cheese. Of course, if we chose to wait some hours they could get us a fowl or duck, but the fatted calf was the only thing in the larder.

It was not much of a *menu* to celebrate the wedding-feast, but I did not care particularly. I left the problem “how to get more” to Jacob, and he gave it up, and consoled himself by remembering that the original “onnymoon” festival consisted largely of “weal and bickles and dings,” so that this was a happy coincidence, after all. The sights of Oudewater were soon seen. There was a nice little old town-hall, worth looking at once that one was on the spot, but not worth going out of one’s way to see; there were some quaint little old houses about a placid, stagnant, odorous little canal—nothing at all worth regretting a lost chance of sketching. The costumes were of the dead-black respectable order of “store-clothes and biled shirt,” as they say in the far West. Some local tradesman had evidently worked off a “job lot” of flaming neckties on the entire male population of the place; and but for this questionable relief, the thirst for a “bit of color” would have been unassuaged. The best part of Oudewater, after all, was the road to it and away from it. The cynic who said “the best part of man is his dog” would probably have made some equally kindly score off sleepy little Oudewater. We soon got back from the preliminary, and, in fact, final survey of the entire “dorp,” to our inn. The lunch was, as usual, served in the billiard-room, or that game was being played in the dining-room, as one chooses to regard it. Our little side table we found rather in the way of a choice company of weedy youths, all smoking weedy young cigars, who punched the scarred balls about vaguely, and laughed enormously when some one jabbed a ball over on the floor—which they did so very often that I fancy it was part of the game. I



A BRAVE MAIDEN OF OUDEWATER.

never saw such play before. It was a cross between billiards and cricket. It was a relief to think our *menu* was short and simple. We were soon out into the free air again, and back-tracking to Gouda over the breezy high-road. The drive was charming, although it was only the reverse way of seeing the same scenes that we had passed in review in the morning.

CHAPTER XXI.

GOUDA.

IN the afternoon we were again at Gouda, and in time to see a little of the place, and to go over the old cathedral, famed principally for its stained glass.

There are some thirty very large windows in all, and they embrace a wide range of subject, all designed in the grand, heroic, billowy, blown-about style of the mid-sixteenth century. Whether the subject be sacred, historical, or Dutch-allegorical, there is no mincing matters in the amplitude of flesh and muscle, and the rich positiveness of tone in the swirls of breezy draperies. There is a very amusing little book in the "English as she is spoke" at Gouda, which the guide of the cathedral will allow you to buy. This describes the glass so fully and characteristically that one feels relieved from much craning of tired neck over the entire thirty odd windows. I began by carefully going into the merits of window No. 1, "Holding forth Liberty of Conscience," as the guide has it. "This represents a chariot, with Tyranny under its wheels. In it sits a woman armed with a shield and sword, denoting Defence of Faith. At her right hand sits a naked woman, denoting Liberty of Conscience," etc. If the wildest enthusiast for entire and wholesale "liberty of conscience," carried even to advanced Socialism, could look upon the bountiful display of personal charms given to this smiling and well-fed type of Liberty, and ask for more, he could have no conscience worth catering to. It is a very

satisfying window, if one goes in for allegory from the undraped point of view. Then there are other windows to glorify the God of Battles, when on the side of the Dutch artillery. One I noted, given by the citizens of Haarlem, to commemorate the taking of Damatia, in 1219. "The citizens of Haarlem," so says the little book, "first *adscended* the walls. An iron *chan et* the entrance to the port was broken by one of their *Ehips*." Strength, Victory, Glory, Perseverance, Mars, Neptune—these are the figurants in this wild operatic performance in colored glass. The little book wisely says: "Strength and Perseverance have ever subdued Violence, and are therefore honored by Victory and Glory—Mars—Neptune. "*Vicit vim virtus*;" that is, virtue has overcome force." Need I say more? The connoisseur in old stained glass of this period will see these windows now before his mind's eye, after these two samples, and be satisfied. Others, who are not satisfied, may easily spend a happy week at Gouda in going through the other twenty-nine of them. The cathedral itself is a very large building, some parts of it of very early date, but mostly restored when restorers were no longer inspired with either sense or piety. It was a deadly dull cathedral, for all its bravery of painted glass; and, after carefully seeing three or four windows, we strolled leisurely past the others, and took the allegories on faith and trust, and with liberal charity. After gazing upward so much, it was a relief to look down at the old memorial slabs decorating the pavement, and at the carved wood-work of some of the old seats. Gouda itself, as a town, is rather interesting, quite good enough to while away an odd day in, if the sketcher happens to find himself at the Hague. Altogether, the day had been a most pleasant one, and, though the towns and villages I had heard of disappointed me, the ones unknown to me were pleasant surprises.

In considering the lay of the land from the map, I fancied that

there ought to be some good material on the southern shores of the Zuider Zee, where it trends round towards Amsterdam. I liked the look of Muiden, Naarden, and the little villages thereabouts (as they took their spots on the map, that was all); and Jacob, being appealed to, confirmed the guess that there was a chance for "skitses" in abundance. As I wished to go to Zaandvoort, I could see Haarlem again on the way. So, then, why not go on to Amsterdam as a centre? There is one advantage in Holland; it is not a vast empire, and one can soon get from place to place of interest, as they all lie tolerably near together. Amsterdam has so much in it to interest and amuse one, an artist especially, that he need never feel injured if he has to see it again and again. On the morning after our arrival we took advantage of the splendid weather for our investigation of Muiden.



VENUS AND NEPTUNE.

CHAPTER XXII.

MUIDEN.

THE suburbs of Amsterdam are rather of mixed interests. There are gardens for the study and enjoyment of botany, zoology, beer, and dancing. There are powerful gasworks and powder-magazines; cemeteries, of course; villas and summer-houses inscribed to "Lust in Rust," with dribbling fountains and plaster-stuck-over-with-shell grottos, plaster statues, and weedy lakes and moats. We pass outlying villages on river and canal, some of them simply delightful. They let the tram run through them, and they permit the gas, but they fight hard to keep up their old charm, and they mostly do it. I was so pleased with the look of Muiderberg that we got off our tram and waited for the next. The same tickets answered; they are so obliging on Dutch railways, or else it was by the subtlety of Jacob—who seemed to be first cousin to every conductor in the kingdom—that we got off and on trams as we liked. Muiderberg was delightful in its small way. I made one sketch, and saw a dozen better subjects afterwards, as usual, and then got on our next tram for Muiden. What a queer, delicious, little old Zuider Zee port it turned out to be—far, far beyond my hopes of it. It is a straggling old place—evidently of some importance in days gone by—still flourishing, however, and full of life and movement. There is a broad, eccentric river dividing and interlacing it, making bridge-spanned islands, and filling its tree-shaded streets and wharfs with river-side

folk, and the waterways with broad-hulled Zuider Zee shipping. The gayly painted and gilded, carved, and brass-enriched sterns of the various craft gave forth glowing spots of color. The haze of the October afternoon took an extra scumble from the peat reek of galley-fire and shore kitchen, and blended in all and sundry of the local colors, harsh or harmonious, into one pleasant bit of gleaming tone. The quays were bordered by avenues of trees, and the fat, yellow tints of autumn mingle and blend, or stand brightly out in spots of trembling gold, against the meshes of interwoven masts and rigging, of brown sails and gay flutter of pennon, of lines of many-tinted garments, hung out to flap themselves dry in the soft air. If any one loves what is called "a play of color," let him happen in Muiden on some such October afternoon. There are piles of purple and tender green cabbages, mounds of red and gold cheeses, bags of dusty meal, kettles and pots of black-brown tar and pitch, heaps of newly kippered sails and cordage, and against and among all this array of foreground and background objects can be seen examples of all the queerly rigged sailor-people of the North Sea ports. The women take no small part in this moving play of light, shade, color, and sound. The feminine notes ring out clear and free in the universal chaff and chatter, and the "Yo heave O!" of the sailors. (The Dutch seaman's equivalent, however, for our "Heave O!" is far more of an agonized below.) The small waterside taverns, with shady skittle-grounds and arbors, had changed so little since the days of Ostade and Jan Steen, that either worthy might have sat down to work without a sigh of regret. There was the same noisy click and clatter of balls and pins, the same groups at play or looking on, smoking and quaffing tankards of ale or sipping little glasses of schnapps. There were Jan Steen's rosy, buxom, obliging hand-maidens, with close-fitting white caps and tabbed jackets, short

skirts and buckled shoes, threading their way wherever thirst raged direst, with their tall beakers of beaded ale. The laughing repartee was ever ready for the risky joke, and the plump waist was ever in the way of the all-embracing arms of the roystering gallants. It was all perfect, of its kind. I did not sniff virtuously at it, and turn away, and pray the good sexless angels to show me the picture of an early Italian master, and purge my sinful eyes. There is always time to cant and recant. I almost felt the great Shepherd of Art at my back, and I almost feared the crash of his crook on my erring head, and, as nearly as I could translate the tangle of his acrid but "perfect English," I was bidden to fly. I felt myself falling back on Sir Toby, and saying, "That thou art virtuous, shall there be no more cakes and ale?" Ay marry, shall there! "and go *to* —!" By and by we will be good, but now it is a real Jan Steen sort of a day, and the atmosphere is haunted with his people. I feel Ostade and Teniers in the air, so let us enjoy them. However, if *I* had written very ignorantly and spitefully against all Dutch art, and then, after twenty years chance to heed me, the directors of the National Gallery had not made a bonfire of all their Dutch pictures, I might also be inclined to call poor Jan Steen a thing so bad that he would blush for modesty. I could watch the festive Dutch sailor play skittles with the inebriate boor, for a few minutes, and even wish there might be another Jan Steen to arise and paint them as they are, just to show them, if nothing else, what amusing, but sad, boors they can make of themselves.

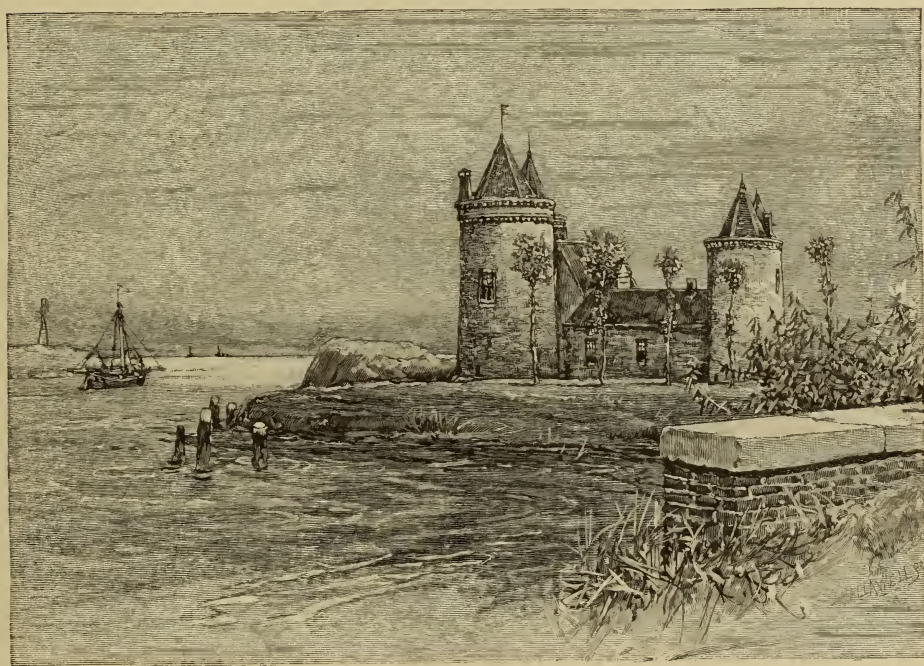
It was only a step from beer and skittles to a little shaded court, so neat and clean, the windows so sparkling, the tiles and bricks so immaculate, the white walls so dazzling, the knockers and doors so burnished, that I felt old Pieter da Hooge must have incanted some spell over the place, to keep it forever fresh and sunny.

Look which way you pleased, up or down the busy, riverside street, it was teeming with life and movement. Not the roaring racket and din of a Thames-side street, with its struggling masses of carts and drays and its bellowing draymen. It was a movement as gentle and placid as the tide running down the broad, muddy stream. Look across the sluggish river, filled with slow-trailing, brown-sailed craft, at the clanging shipyards on the other shore. What tangles of masts and spars and ropes crossing and bewildering themselves, from the vessels, tilted over at every angle to suit the caulkers' need! What spots of color in the sea-worn old hulls! How the red flames lick and dart from under the black sides of great iron pots of seething tar and pitch! How the smoke and steam swirl about in wreaths and clouds, and the little, busy figures of the caulkers and riggers run here and there like ants! Even their distant shouts and laughter, and choice seafaring Dutch, culled from profane authors, can be heard, as in a distant dream, mingled with the faintly echoed clack of the caulking-mallet or the rhythmic beat of the hammer on the blazing iron, sending out showers of sparks in the ruddy glow of the blacksmiths' shops. The music of toil seems to have a kindred sympathy with the pictures of toil, seen through the shifting veil of mist across the water. Through the half-closed eyes, and heard with half-closed ears, it is all very much of a symphony, Wagnerian and Whistlerian. As you look dreamily at it through the smoke of a cigar, it seems as if a little more of a puff of one's own blue smoke would blow away the entire picture. Looking towards the Zuider Zee, one sees the square outlines of the slot, or castle, of Muiden. The whole subject—towers, sea, and surroundings—"compose" so pictorially from that point of view that one feels rather as if it were too much of a good thing—too like a "sweetly pretty" chromo on the top of a plum-box. This strikes



A NORTH SEA SKIPPER.

one all the more if it be a day of purple haze and melting colors. Nearer by, the square, weather-scarred old walls are rugged enough; and when one can take note of the dreadfully modern windows, that are stuck too liberally about it, and the various other improvements that have broken out all over it, like a sad distemper, the "Slot Muiden" is ugly enough to satisfy the most exacting realist of the new school.



CASTLE OF MUIDEN.

I absorbed it all thoughtfully and with no care to exert myself by sketching it, or to do more than add my smoke to the prevailing reek. And this tobacco was no little of a boon just then; for picturesque and comfortable as the mossy old wall was upon which Jacob and I had disposed ourselves, I strongly

suspected that it harbored near it something in the shape of wearied and suffering, but not faint, drainage.

I did not like to fly on the undoubted strength of my impressions, as nothing so dispels a dream of sensuous form and color as a sensitive nose. No neutralizing influence is, however, more handy or effectual than a nice, fragrant cigar. If a painter or any other wishes to sit him down to muse or sketch beside the odorous canals of Holland, I rather pity him if he can't smoke. Not only for the above reason should he try, but he otherwise looks so incomplete and undecorated in a country where even the boys all smoke. The small boy stares rudely at you, and says things that it is a pleasure not to understand, if he sees you courting remark by not smoking.

Smoking, by the way, is not a very expensive luxury in Holland. I asked the host of a good hotel in Friesland for one of his very best cigars. He beamed knowingly upon me, and brought me a box from a secret drawer.

"Two for a penny."

"Nay, but I want a really fine, fine thing; price no object."

"Oh, very well." If I wanted to ruin myself, he hinted, he could give me such a cigar; and he got out a highly decorated article from another secret drawer.

"And these?"

"A penny each!" Just double the others, as he carefully told me.

I took one, and, as the old toper said of the pure water he drank as an experiment, "it wasn't so bad."

"And how much do the cigars cost that are smoked ordinarily?" I asked.

"Oh, ten or twelve a penny."

No wonder that the small Dutch boy can dim his youthful eye and sallow his tender cheek, at this easy rate.

While thus gazing lazily at old Slot Muiden, and feeling like a foreground figure in a faded drop-curtain, with soothing music being played before it, and dreading to move lest I should spoil the picture by tumbling out of it, there came by a queer, elfish little maiden, with a tight little white cap on, leaving free much of a mop of fluffy golden hair. A little jacket of flowered print, a short skirt of white, black stockings, and a pair of white clogs completed her array. A large, ripe melon was clasped to her youthful bosom with one hand, and tucked under her other arm was a large-eyed, cheap, and elementary-jointed doll, attired as yet only in its own innocence. She gave Jacob a sharp look of half-recognition as she was clattering by, and adding her picturesque person to the foreground of our drop-scene. "Stay her a moment, Jacob, and ask her about the castle—if we can get in to see it, and anything else you can think of." She was in no way loath to stay, that giddy young mite. She knew all about the "Slot;" we would be welcomed gladly—so we inferred from her gushing and playful manner. Jacob patted her tangled hair, and got possession of the dolly to admire. We both went into raptures over it. As I had never seen anything in the semblance of humanity more touchingly grotesque, I admired that quality, so as to be passably sincere. Having noted down the wee maiden's main points of attire, and enjoyed her antics with the Faithful One, I nodded to him to let her run along home. Not she. There was a strong spirit of latent flirtation in her young nature, and she was in no hurry to tear herself away from the good-natured Jacob. So, not to detain her longer (the melon had had one fall already, and was nearly "boosted," as Jacob said), we all walked towards the Slot together. We thought to say good-day to her at the drawbridge. Nay, she would ring the clanging bell for us, if I would catch hold of the oozing melon for a moment. Anything to oblige

the young lady. When the door opened with a click by some unseen spring, she was offered her melon again, and our best thanks and adieus. Not in the least did she attempt to leave us. She laughed a silvery laugh, the little minx, and owned up to Jacob that the Slot was her very own home. She was the keeper's daughter fair, and she had seen Jacob there before with strangers, and she knew him all the time. Her mother was the keeper, and she was ill in bed; "not infectious"—only a little brother for her. She handed over the melon to a stolid, lumpish servant, and, keeping her blowsy doll, proceeded to show us the place herself.

First of all, she led us into a great, bare, gaunt, unfurnished room, a banqueting-hall in good old times. There were some traces of fourteenth and fifteenth century carving in the stone fireplace and in the window bays; some wood-carving, too, up among the shadowy black rafters of the roof; but most of the decoration near at hand was worn away, or, worse still, altered and improved away. Then we went into another great, bare, musty room: it had evidently been hung with arras, and had been made much of in the past good old times; and then, probably, came the bad old times, and the tapestries were taken down, to please some whim of changing fashion, or, perhaps, to keep the wolf from crossing the drawbridge and walking in without even clanging the castle bell. Anyhow, fashion or want, there had been no pictured hangings of arras on these mouldy walls for many a long day. It is now a waste of shreds and patches of half-stripped wall-paper, of leprous stains of damp and mould, and half-scaled-off plaster. The air was heavy, and dank with stuffiness, and though the floor was cleanly scrubbed, there were places where it had nearly rotted through; places, too, blotched with dark stains—blood of crime, or spilled grease of long-past festivities—goodness knows! In a far corner of



OLD DOORWAY.

this ghostly, grisly apartment, near the window, and overlooking the drawbridge, was a most touching effort at a doll's house "set out." A couple of old candle-boxes composed the main structure; then came raisin boxes and old sardine tins, and old bottomless boxes of all sorts, to form the kitchens and summer-houses of the residence proper. Odd bits of wood and old tin lids and fragments of broken china were making believe to be furniture and bric-à-brac. The dolls were of the most sketchy and fragmentary kind: the battered remnant of a wax creation was the queen of the domain, and then caste dwindled down through rag and sawdust, to rag alone, to wood—splinted and maimed mostly—and then to various kinds of paper—largely of the leprous wall-paper, hanging in tempting shreds. There was a torn rag of an old rug, on which she knelt before her shrine. She was evidently very handy with her scissors, as the great variety of objects she had cut out of paper showed; little white-paper babies in little brown-paper cradles seemed to be her pet industry. She had been making a whole nursery of them before she went out, and would go back to them as soon as she got rid of us, so she said. She had rather hurried us out of the first room to get on to this pet corner. Here, this faded rag was an enchanted carpet to her; she could curl herself up on it, and look into a fairyland of her own making. A very elf she looked—and acted, too. While Jacob turned for a moment, she gave me a meaning look that meant mischief, and made me into a sworn confederate at the same time. She was at Jacob's back, leaning against a panel in the wall; she touched some spring and vanished, the secret panel sliding back noiselessly. I kept Jacob looking at a blood-stain on the floor until she was all right. He turned to ask something about this stain, and he turned again to look for some exit. The only one was far away, at the end of the big, silent room.

"Goot Gott! wen is dis shile gone away? She was by my back a minnit ago!" I did not deceive him or relieve him, further than by shaking my head very solemnly. "Well, of all de curious shilds *I* ever saw, dot beats me." He looked helplessly into her largest doll's hospital, but could not fathom the painful mystery at all. That was the only bit of furniture in the room. "She never went out de door once, or I must have saw 'er." He was still looking in a dazed, inquiring way at the door, when the panel slid softly back again, and she sprang out like a young sprite, and jumped half-way up his broad back, with a scream of glee. Poor Jacob stood open-mouthed with wonder. There was no trap-door or hole in the floor that *he* could see. He took her by the wriggling shoulders, and gave her a good shake, as much to assure himself that she was real flesh and blood as to punish her for the trick played on him. When he let her go she dashed through the panel again, before his astonished eyes. It was a great relief to him, I fancy, as he must have thought there was witchcraft in the air. We soon exhausted the secret panel game, and then, after seeing another deserted room or two, we went up on the roof, through dim, dusty garrets, with mazes of head-cracking beams. How fresh and bright the pure, free air seemed after the desolation and stuffiness of the rooms below! The far horizon was rimmed around with the faint gray and amber tones of the Zuider Zee, the distant sails were turned to gold, and the golden glow even warmed to dusky brown the heavy black smoke trailing after the little fussy tug steamers dotted about among the becalmed sailing craft. Landward, over the faint green and gold of the country seemed to be broidered a pattern of interwoven waterways in tarnished silver; and great bold blots of dusky broken reds, would, on further looking at, be found to be a tangled maze of house-tops and chimneys. The curls and wreaths of peat smoke would twine

and twirl like blurred and chaotic scrolls. I could have enjoyed it all much more on that most ideal afternoon, if that impish guide of ours had not made believe every moment that she was going to slide down the steep roof, or climb up to the weathercock, or stand on her head on the ridge of the gable. "She preak her nack, sure, zome day, wiz doze shimnastic dricks." At that moment she was lying prone on the stone coping, with her spidery legs waving aloft in space. We finally got away from the free upper air in safety, and though it was stuffier than ever down-stairs, in one respect we breathed more freely. I happened to be at that time rather anxious (for pictorial purposes) to see a few dungeons and torture-chambers of the good old time. So down some steep, winding stone steps we twisted and stumbled after our sprite, until we came to a little, uncomfortable kind of den, said to be the guard-room—I think the guard must have wished to be a prisoner now and then, just for a change. In the floor of this den was a trap with a heavy iron ring. This we lifted, and the adventurous Jacob went down into the depths. I was about to follow, when I was plucked by the sleeve, and motioned to help to shut down the trap, and make a prisoner of Jacob. I made believe not to take the joke, but sent down the young humorist before me, to make certain of her society while we were below, and we kept a pretty sharp eye on her for fear of her wayward little "practicals." The dungeon itself was unpicturesque and unprofitable enough—a dark "oubliette," in fact. I was glad to get out of it, and into the open air again. It was nearly an equal sense of relief to think that we were about to restore our wild young elf to her no doubt anxious parent, whole of skin, and not her mangled remains in a pillow-case. Jacob forgave her her various pranks, gave her a kindly kiss and a few of his own personal "nickels"—and he seldom parted with his coin for sight-seeing.

There is a lot of interesting history attached to Slot Muiden, but it would be more in the way of the guide-book maker to tell it; in fact, the guide man has told it in his own best style. I saw it more from the sketcher's point of view, even after I knew a few pages of its history; and all about the place the material is excellent for the artist or antiquary.

In spring, when the fruit bloom is out, I should think the country about Muiden would sing with color, there are so many gardens. And then, when that pearly haze that hangs about the Zuider Zee conspired to mingle with the other tones and tints, I fancy that the effect would be entirely "precious," to borrow the happy slang of the amateur. I found Muiden so fascinating that I went several times to it, sometimes spending the day, other times an hour or so, going to or from neighboring places. Of such neighbors the little old walled town of Naarden is full of sketching stuff, and well worth seeing if one does not care to sketch. It has had its old walls and battlements improved, and put into a tolerable state of defence.—that is, if the enemy would not try to injure it with modern artillery. It is a large military station, and the place runs over with Dutch soldiers, good-natured, slow-moving, dreamy fellows. It was a piping and a cigar time of peace with the bulk of them, evidently, all day and every day. There is a most interesting and sketchable old Town-hall in the place, with fine old council-room, high panelled, and elaborately carved in oak; some grim old portraits of bygone burgomasters, and a few flourishy old-time maps high up on the white part of the walls above the panels; also some carved old tables and benches, that would warm the heart of the real collector of such stores. The keeper's wife, a pretty little pink-and-white woman, with a prettier little pink-and-white baby (like a bit of faintly tinted old Chelsea-China), showed us over the place, and did the honors

with a quaint old-fashioned grace. She seemed as if she had stolen away from one of Terburg's pictures to show us the manners of the seventeenth century. Of course, Jacob played with the baby in his most engaging style, while I sketched right and left, and noted wildly. We descended to the dungeons, of course, baby and all, and as we wound down the dimly lighted stone stairs, we seemed to be bringing an "order of release" to some one languishing in chains—only, luckily, there was no one to release. The good old-time dungeon is not used at all, now. They store away the rack and whipping-post there, usually, and make a kind of show place of it. The modern cells, where they put the infrequent criminal, were all empty. They were so neat and tidy that they looked as if they had been recently done up, to tempt a breach of the law. I have been shown a worse room in an inn in Brittany several times. The keeper's wife took rather a pride in her cells: each had a plain, low, iron cot, with a straw mattress, a blanket, and coarse, clean sheets, a low stool, and a little table, with a Bible on it. It only wanted a fire on the hearth, a kettle on the hob, and a nice cat, and many a good man would have been glad to call it "sweet home." The keeper's wife went into various statistics concerning the sad falling off of crime in the quiet little town. The soldiers were about the only ones who got into trouble; and when they did, they had their own military prison at the barracks. This was offered as a kind of an apology, and with something of an injured tone. I am sure that mild-eyed little woman only longed for a few prisoners, in order to show them how nicely they would be treated there compared with other places. There were some good bits of stone carving and brick-work on the outside of the Town-hall, and a few fairish old houses and bits of gateways, but nothing very remarkable. I never like to sketch in or about a fortress without getting the

fullest permission from headquarters. No end of unpleasant little things may happen to the unwitting sketcher who is not careful in this matter. There are several large and flourishing cemeteries between Naarden and Amsterdam, and on my various excursions back and forth I was often struck (I also own to a certain amount of solemn amusement at the same time) by the peculiarities of some of the funeral cortéges. I noted a sort of combination of hearse and omnibus, wherein the rather lively mourners sat and held the "casket" (generally a child's) on their knees, or, at least, they appeared to hold it on their knees. Anyhow, they were seated very comfortably around it, and, well, if they did smoke pretty generally, it is, after all, only the custom of the country.

As Jacob would fain have me go and see one of these large cemeteries, promising me that it was "not at all dull," I went, partly to please him. Close to the very outside gates are the bowers and tables of the restaurants and refreshment gardens, without which, in Holland, nothing can be seriously undertaken. There were stalls, too, for the sale of gingerbread and photographs and aerated waters, and stalls of apples and nuts. I almost expected to see a few swings and a pistol-gallery, they are such sad light-hearted people! Inside, we found the grounds beautifully laid out, with all sorts of shady evergreens, and beds of flowers of every hue. It really looked more like some horticultural show than a city of the dead. The monuments seemed rather mildly decorative than nobly impressive. Still, it was all more impressive than the French cemetery that Dickens mentions as reminding him of "preparations for fireworks." There was a vista under the shady trees, showing the Zuider Zee beyond, and now and again the spire of a gray, lonely old church on the sand dunes. I went straight for this latter incident in the landscape as soon as I could.

It was a bleak, lonesome object enough when we came to it, perched on the top of the highest mound of drift-sand, its gray, grizzly walls surrounded by a belt of stunted, wind-bitten pines. It seemed to have felt "the blown froth of the bitter sea" pretty cruelly in its time. The scarred and twisted trees had a chronic bend to their scant limbs, as if the tempest had stricken them with age and palsy during the blasts of the winter nights. The sun-flaked blisters of the paint on gates and windows had been blown off down to the shrivelled wood; the mortar had been blown from the crevices of the stone-work; the crumbling dust of the old headstones in the churchyard had been blown away so clean that name and date and pious inscription had gone as well.

Jacob was rather aggrieved to think that I had so hurried through their most attractive cemetery. "Dis is a most ratched ole church. Nobody mostly go to it any mo'. Dere is alretty notting to see more dan what you are lookin' at now."

"It is quite too impressive as it is, Jacob. We will sit down on this mound of sand, and get a more realizing sense of its rugged pathos."

The Faithful One resigned himself with his usual fortitude, and sat down upon the yielding heap. He took a mighty pinch of snuff, and sighed over the lost chance of showing me also the Jewish burial-ground on that late afternoon, and then he brightened up a little, and said he would tell me "a vonny ding."

"You remember dot leetle Choo wot keep de shop where we puy de fottegraff? de one wiz de speckleticles?"

"I know."

"Werry well. He say dot w'en 'e die he gets hisself perried py de Brotestant zeemeterry, bekoos dot is more sheep as his zeemeterry. Den his brodder—wot is rich—he zay he may go to hell if he do dot"—(I did not gather from Jacob's tone that

the brother used the expression in the form of a vulgar and profane expletive, but entirely in a sense of anxiety for the future welfare of the backslider)—“but he zay dot he resk dot; he perry 'izelf all de zame by de sheepest zeemeterry.”

It was a radiant change to get back to the hotel, after our grewsome afternoon, to a cheerful fire, and the latest English and American papers. Even the table d'hôte was more than usually light and festive.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ZAANDFOORT.

IF, while at Amsterdam, the visitor intends to devote part of a day to the inevitable Zaandam, it would be as well to make out the entire day, by going on to Zaandfoort-on-Sea, and getting a blow of the fine North Sea breeze, and at the same time a little idea of a favorite Dutch watering-place which is well worth seeing. The sketcher will find far more to interest him at the former place, however. In fact, weeks might be spent there with pleasure and advantage, if a note or sketch book forms part of one's outfit. The sight-seeing tourist will easily knock off both places in a short day, and sigh for a few more villages to conquer. Zaandfoort, being the bathing, breathing, and "gambolling" place of Amsterdam and Rotterdam, and their neighboring towns, is no small, retiring, or modest affair. When the visitor comes by train into its vast and elaborate railway station of red and yellow intercomplicated brick and stone work, the first impression is that he has arrived at a chief town in Opera Comique Land. One passes—after the first surprise, not always pleasant, that these chattering, clattering fisher-girls, so very decorative in costume, on the station platform, are not, after all, part of a *corps de ballet*—on, along an avenue of bazaar-like shops, containing all those enticing things that people, with restless money burning holes in their pockets, love to invest in the moment they see them, such as huge, carven meerschaum pipes and cigar-tubes. Venus—still innocent of the thrill of nicotine

—rising from the ocean, was a favorite design on these works of art. For the spendthrift and prodigal the Venus was carried to the full extent, in size, of human “coloring” powers. For the more modest purse and person the Venus was more fragmentary and possible. There were heads, busts, arms of the nymph, with showy bracelets on, and legs with high-heeled Paris boots, to meet the thirst for realism, strongly *prononcée* in Dutch sea-side towns. Huge windows full of the most glaring ties and scarfs, and handkerchiefs of every hue and style of decoration, with borders of every sportive thing, from ballet-girls to butterflies. There was not, in all that long line of glittering shops, a single thing of common, low-minded utility. There was one shop of chromos and photographs of the professional beauty of every clime; and before its unblushing windows (outside) was a small crowd nearly all day long. Inside the shop there was never a soul but a dark, brooding, lone female, a prey to *ennui* and thoughts of coming bankruptcy. There was little or no crowd in any other part of the arcade, and as this did not seem a very paying one, perhaps it was just as well for the others. The fact was coming sadly home to most of the wearied shopkeepers in that draughty arcade, that the gay season was nearly over and gone. We passed on through the covered way to a vast echoing restaurant. How empty it looked, with its spare tables and chairs piled away in one corner, literally in hundreds!

There is generally a spasmodic revival of business on Saturdays at these places, and as we happened to be there on that day we were not entirely alone. The few specimen waiters about were of the frizzed-hair, black-jacketed, white-aproned, correct boulevard type. The *menu* and the prices thereon were also boulevard, with a vengeance. Never mind! we will now wander forth and see what there may be to note in this land of Offenbachanalia. The scene is comprised within a wilderness

of blown sand, tacked lightly down with sparse threads of wiry grass to whatever solid foundation there may be for this part of watery Holland. Beyond there is a strip of vexed gray sea, and nearer a crowd of bathing-hut frames piled under shelter, except just a very few, left out for the Saturday visitor; a rim of red roofs and crazy chimneys of fisher-huts just peeping over the edge of the sandy dunes; a few fisher-people, with idle hands in wide pockets staring at the sea, at each other, and at the stranger most of all. Along the newly embanked road (or perhaps they call it a boulevard) were irregular masses of florid-looking villas — mushroom things that seemed to have come up overnight. They were all more or less empty, having most of them pleading appeals to the passing stranger to come and hire or buy them. They looked a better speculation for the builder than for the buyer. There were several hand-organs playing at once, a couple in view, and the rest in the air somewhere. This was the *mise en scène* of the operatic-looking place as we first caught sight of it. But as no smiling troop of fisher-maidens, with wax-work eyes and complexions, and clock-work movements, came bounding forward to twittering music, expressive of their robust calling, Jacob and I took the stage and had our little scenes all to ourselves. It was early in the day for the gay *mondaines* of Amsterdam to arrive (goodness be thanked!), so we turned our attention to the fisher-folk, mostly the younger fry thereof; and I need not say that the entire community turned its undivided attention to us, the moment I began to sketch them. There was one small girl, with a very large, healthy baby, who took a great deal of manœuvring and dodging to circumvent and bring to book. Her notion was, seemingly, that by bringing that baby to bear upon me like a battering-ram she would finally succeed in getting a sight at what I

was doing. I had only to keep well faced to the pair, noting down their little ways, and sketching furiously meanwhile. When they came too near I would make believe to tickle the baby with light prods of the pencil butt, or else seriously take the two, and, speaking to them in good round English, set them back to a convenient spot, and proceed with my notes again as fast as I could. I tried a sort of mild mesmerism on them by endeavoring to "fix them with a glittering eye," but, either the eye didn't glitter as it ought, or else they were slow in fixing. Jacob and the mamma were laughing and enjoying our little *contre-danse*, and were not disposed to help a bit. However, my little partners were soon sufficiently noted down, and then there was the usual reward of small coin, evidently quite unexpected, for there was an extra caper, a whoop of delight, and a disappearance from the scene to tell the other small fry of the place, who soon came in noisy droves, to see if there was to be any more fun. I think that, on the same terms, I could have danced away and off with the entire infant population of Zaandfoort, like another "Pied Piper of Hamelin." After a few more notes we came away; there was not much more to do in a sketchy way. The men-folk were all off fishing, and most of the womenkind were at Amsterdam market, making the place unearthly with their strident yells.

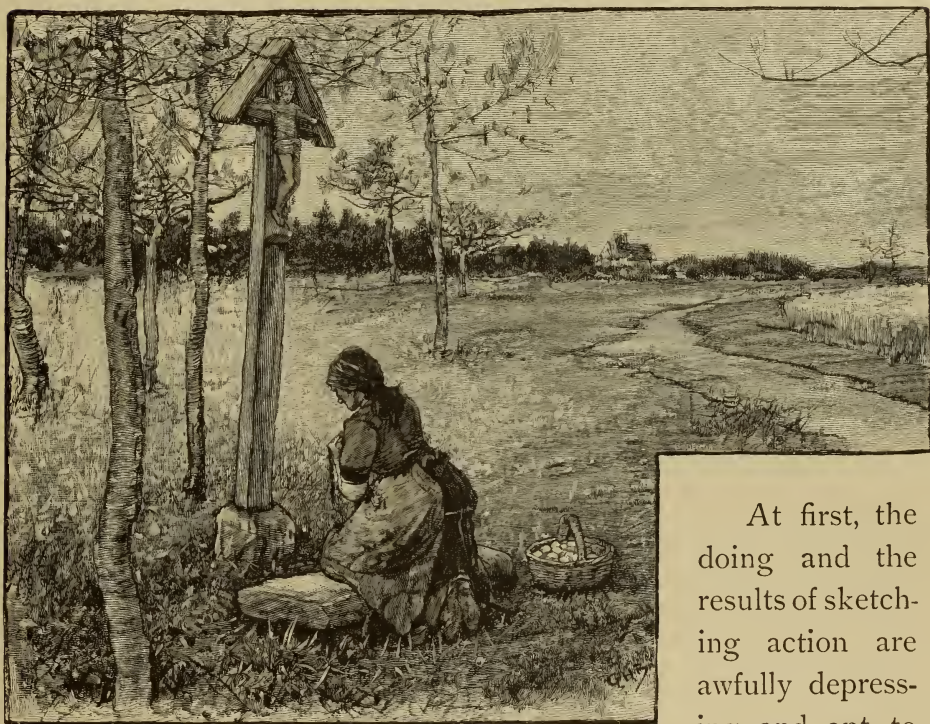
While waiting at the highly decorated railway station for our return train to town, there arrived the late afternoon train from Amsterdam. It was positively running over with these very blooming, picturesque, and pungent goddesses of the fish-creel, whose absence as spots of color and high-pitched efforts of sound we had all day missed from the breezy sands of Zaandfoort. How that very lively trainful of fisher-damsels seemed to fill the great, echoing station at once with life and animation! As the train came slowly rumbling in, all that

could manage to squeeze their rosy but weather-beaten countenances out of the car-windows did so, and they also waved wild recognitions right and left, and laughed and sang and whooped at the highest capacities of their healthy lungs. Before the train had half stopped they were skipping down, with loud impact of wooden *klumpen*, upon the platform; and then, slinging their empty, scale-spangled creels over their shoulders with a round, free-handed swirl, regardless of how near the banging baskets might shave the heads of the bystanders, they clattered out of the place, leaving a certain sense of displacement and change of atmospheric conditions, as if there had been a slight visitation of a saline whirlwind. There was no sort of evidence of fatigue after their hard day's work; with such a free lilt in their stride, they looked as if they could vault a six-barred gate, *klumpen* and all. I followed the crowd to the open, and saw them form into small, chummy groups, and straggle homeward over the brow of the sandy dunes. I had no time to sketch them very elaborately, but I just made a note of the picture they seemed to steel into. Their gold-pinned lace caps, with a high, fore-and-aft-cocked straw hat atop, the brown, empty creels over their shoulders, the short skirts fluttering in the wind, the dark-blue stockings in white wooden shoon, plodding or prancing through the sand, and all standing clear against the pale, late, afternoon sky — every movement had some grace or strength or character, as they went, as if blown by the breeze, across the plains of shifting sand and stunted grass, to their homes behind the dike, in the little sheltered rifts.

On our way to Zaandfoort we had given a few of the morning hours to Zaandam, but I did not care to see again the long, watery avenue of the place, with its hundreds of wind-mills "all a-blowing," nor did I wish to pay my duty-visit to the

shop of Peter the Great. So we took a good-natured-looking boatman at the ferry, and floated lazily about on the broad, placid river, just above the locks, and peered into the queer, old-fashioned gardens, and into the comic summer-houses by the water's edge. It was not indiscreet, as there was no notion of any one's privacy being studied or considered in the matter of these leafy bowers and blooming banks of hollyhock and aster. The correct thing seemed to be to enjoy one's self as publicly as possible. The hedges seemed to be made low on purpose for the neighbors to step over and take part in any fun going, or, at least, to look over and see the others enjoy themselves. The trelliswork of the summer-houses was invitingly open to outside gazers, and there were little steps and landing-stages handy, down at the water's edge, where boat-loads of friends might draw up and make themselves at home. It did not seem to be a place where the spirit of sport ever raged on the waters. I saw no sign of any one showing off in an outrigger, or any other racing-craft. The boats—such as I actually saw—were of the old-fashioned, broad-bottomed, safety-assuring sort; highly painted and gilded, and scarlet-cushioned, but not sportive in the least. It was not a moment to do much sketching. We floated idly about, the short hour we were there, and I gladly would have spent the day doing just that and no more; letting such sensitized plates as were in working order back in the brain take any impressions they liked, and to “fix” and preserve any that were worth having, or not, as the case might be. Yet, even in floating about in this dreamy mood, it is well always to have a fit sketch-book at hand—in hand, really—and a couple of well-sharpened pencils ready. If one has to fumble about for a book, and then find a knife, and then sharpen a pencil, the quickly-moving thing—so often good—is gone. Then, too, it is the feeling of bother in having to

prepare one's materials that prevents many a worthy effort being attempted. The more one strives to catch the spirit of a figure, or of groups of figures, in action, the more one's capacity of seeing all about and around a thing at once is quickened and made surer. After a certain experience in this way, a quiet, or, above all, a "posing" figure seems mild and tame in comparison.



A WAYSIDE CROSS.

At first, the doing and the results of sketching action are awfully depressing, and apt to discourage one; but, after all, no

matter how bad the actual sketch may be, a great deal more knowledge has been acquired than one dreams of at the time. And we soon get to know the vast difference between real action and "posed" action, and that is worth a great deal of

trouble. Although I had the ready book and pencil in hand on that sleepy, sunny river, there was little done except to note down a few odd things, and add "Mem. To come here again, and stay a week or two." One could easily come and go every day from Amsterdam, if preferred. The boats and the trams and trains run continually.

CHAPTER XXIV.

UTRECHT AND ARNHEIM.

AS we were now come pretty nearly to the end of the list of things to see in and about Amsterdam, I began to plan a jaunt, by way of Utrecht, to Arnheim, and then along through Brabant to Maestricht. Of course, other plans were thought of and weighed in the scale, but the balance was in favor of Brabant. Jacob was set to work to look up his trains and find out anything of interest, and prepare generally. We found that we could spend a day or two at Utrecht with great profit, as there are so many fine things of artistic interest in and about the place generally.

I can't say much for the way Utrecht "leads up" to her attractions, from the Amsterdam side, at least; for a more uninteresting strip of country I never beheld. However, it is soon over, that's one comfort. I can't say of it as a friend said of his claret, that his lunching guests were rather shy of: "Do have some more; it isn't very good, but there's lots of it!" Utrecht is gay and bright enough, but that impression may have been partly owing to the monotonous prelude to it, and partly to the fact that it was market-day.

The streets were filled with bustling, chattering crowds, bartering and bargaining with much vigor and merry clamor. There was little to note in specialty of type or costume. The streets are wide, well-kept, tree-shaded avenues, with many large, showy shops, with the usual spread of pastry, confection-

ery, jewelry, and *articles de Paris*, to catch the eye of the rich *bourgeoisie* and the opulent farmer. The public buildings are many, and, if not very impressive, may be, at least, termed "imposing." The town-hall is not very old, nor even Dutch in character. It merely strives to be massive and classic (of a very mixed order), and succeeds nobly. On the upper floors of the vast building there is a very good and interesting museum indeed, rich in many rare objects of archæological and artistic interest. They are mostly antiquities connected with the stormy history of the town, and the fair old city of Utrecht has had as goodly a share of ups and downs in the way of calamities and prosperities as most places in the stormy Netherlands. In this very museum there are some hundred old prints and pictures of their grand old cathedral, riven by the crash of a fearful thunderbolt, and mangled by the wild fury of the storm that followed it. It must have seemed to the terrified people as if the very crack of doom had come. This was in 1674, and for about a hundred years after that "fell swoop" of tempest, the débris of the building remained where it fell. The inhabitants were either awed with the feeling that it was in some way the result of divine wrath, and that it would be better to let the thing remain as a warning to them, or they were too discouraged and poor at the time to attempt any restoration; and even at best, the restoration, when it did come, was but a patching of the parts left standing, and a clearing away of what had fallen. Judging from the noble tower remaining, the cathedral must have been of the first order of carven splendor.

There are many bits of its débris in the museum to show what it once was, when in its glory. There are also preserved there the usual covetable old beakers and tankards of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, goldsmiths' work, some choice old graven glass of the same period—in fact, all the

sumptuous "set-outs" of the festive board, so very gorgeous at that luxurious time, are preserved for us there. There are many other objects of interest, to the student of art especially, and they give one every facility to study them. I saw several easels about the place. The custodian reached down an old drum and herald's trumpet from on high, so that I could sketch all round them if I wished. There is also at Utrecht a very good gallery of pictures, ancient and modern — nothing, of



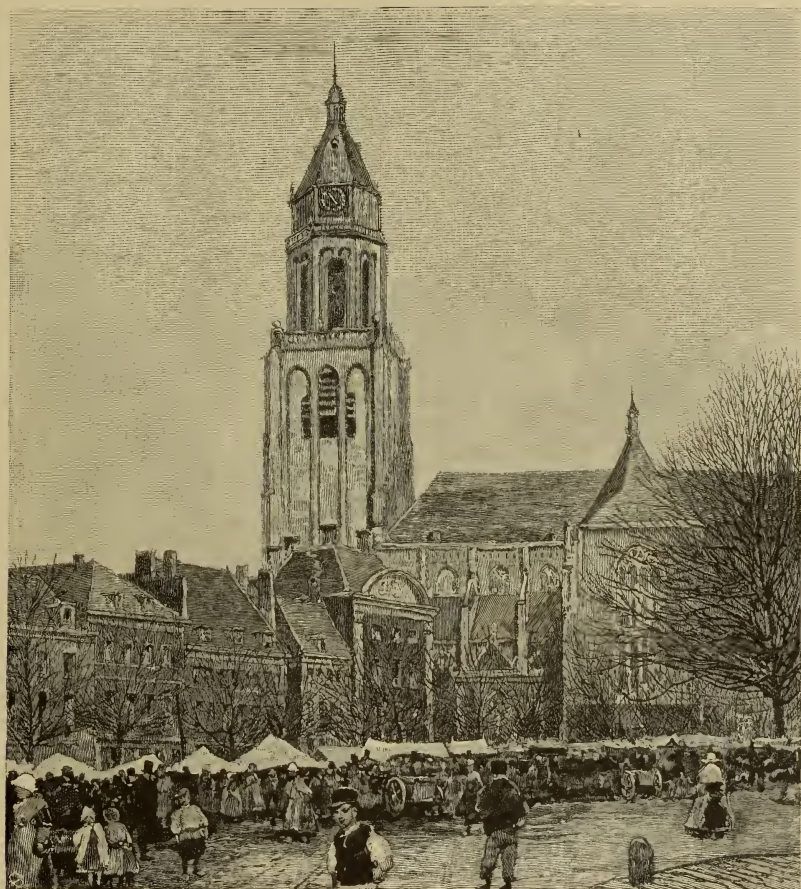
ARNHEIM.

course, like the galleries of other places, like the Hague and Amsterdam, or even Haarlem, but still well worth seeing.

There is a large and curious canal running through the town, with a kind of two-story quay alongside it. It seemed full of "go" and movement, and lots of color, and plenty of possibilities in the way of sketching. There was a lively fish-market at a bustling corner of it, and there must have been a miraculous catch of prawns and shrimps the day before, somewhere near

Utrecht. I never saw such an overflow of them. The very air was redolent and pink with them. They can't be very indigestible to Dutch folk, either, or many would have died that day, judging from the free and unstinted consumption of them by the general populace. They were carrying them away in paper sacks, and in their wide breeches pockets, without any sack. It only seemed to be the very finicky, and those with spare time to kill, and those not hungry, who took the shells off before eating them. A good, long, fatiguing market-day will, somehow, make you feel as if you had been in the place a week when night comes on. Our inn was in the thick of the racket, and, as the successful market-people strayed in to moisten their parched shrimps, the din increased in speed and pitch. We had thought of staying overnight, and going on to Arnheim early in the morning. As this row increased, Jacob was put in communion with his time-table. We could easily catch a nice train, if we started then and there, and get to Arnheim for a quiet dinner, and, better still, a quiet night of it. We bade a hurried adieu to the gorged inn, whose flurried host seemed even glad to have our room, and we sped to our waiting train, and just in time. I should have enjoyed the daylight view of the country we were soon speeding through. It looked, in the dim twilight, to be of a more varied character than that we came past in the early morning.

Arnheim struck me as being so cool and fresh and calm, after the racket of Utrecht! The hotel was of a different stamp, too. It was like a good Hague hotel, with a landlord welcoming you in clear, sound English, and all the servants more or less up to a certain maltreatment of the language, so that one could make some sort of impression on them when out of Dutch for the moment. The hotel was not in the heart of the town, but just on the upland slope, near to the Rhine—I think its name



MARKET-DAY IN ARNHEIM.

is the "Soliel." After our quiet little nicely served dinner we felt so refreshed, and washed clean of "the toils of the day and the din of the fair," that we took our soothing cigars, and strolled out into the peaceful, starlit air.

It was, after all, a good move getting away to this restful place. I could fancy the noise and reek that would be kept up at the Golden Animal at Utrecht until all hours of the morning. It is all very well, if one feels disposed to go down and join in the pandemonium; but if seeking rest for the quivering eardrum, the best place is miles away, as we found by successful experiment. The shops of Arnheim were still ablaze, and inviting the passer-by to indulge in all sorts of articles of luxury and superfluity. I never saw streets of shops filled with so many things I never hope to covet as I have remarked in some of the Dutch towns of minor import. If one is, happily, indifferent to the splendid but splurgy meerschaum, or qualmed by the show of fat confectionery, or undazed by the pretentious and hollow jewelry, or scared by the decided tone of the hosiers' startling goods, he can always keep his coin nearly intact about him in these places. If one has to be thought a fool in any given direction, he is safer there from temptation if his foolery happen to be in things æsthetic. He will hasten him away from the arsenical and gas-tarical hues of the screaming chromos, from the coal-scuttles enriched with chaste ornament in mother-of-pearl, from the wobbly, veneered tables, with thin, helpless legs, from great, garish mirrors, with careering scrolls in Dutch metal, and all the other luxurious abominations. The tempting shops, nay, even the towns containing such, are few and far between, when once one has left the Hague and Amsterdam behind.

However, the Dutch people are great collectors and lovers of good things, and one good reason for the scarcity and dear-

ness of "curios" may lie in the fact that they exhaust their own supplies themselves, and far outbid the wandering stranger who is on the lookout for bargains. The showy stuff one sees there in profusion is created for the newly enriched cheese and butter farmer, or the returned planter from the Dutch colonies. Arnheim is a very wealthy and exclusive town, with many costly and imposing residences therein (that is, the new part of it). There is little of Dutch character in any of the various orders of mixed architecture that one sees; the houses and villas are mostly modern, like the fortunes of the owners. The prevailing style is the French private hotel of the provinces, but with certain classic variations. One is never led into charging them with inconsistency, as they never seemed to care to have that quality. They were built for convenience and for show, and if they have not the first, they mostly have the latter attribute, to a high degree. Having ceased to amuse or instruct ourselves in the gas-lighted streets of business, we had strolled into the quiet, tree-lined avenues, beside the park and the long stretch of ornamental water that winds through that part of the town. Jacob tried to impress me with tales of the sudden rises to fortune he had heard of among these well-housed, opulent citizens, and I was glad to know of their prosperity, and to note the lavish way they seemed to adorn their palatial residences; but, when it was all said and done, it was not entirely what I had come so far to see. For any special joy—except the quiet absence of any envy—it was giving me, I might as well have been walking down Park Lane in London, or the Fifth Avenue in New York. We left the scenes of select opulence, and wandered off to the other end of the town, down along the shadow-haunted streets about the great church. It was a massive, looming old pile, as we came upon it in the moonlight, eloquent with musical clamor of pealing *carillon* every few minutes. The sacred

precincts were rather damp and odorous, as well as impressive and grand, and after a certain time the damp and the "whiffs" seem to increase and grow out of all proportion to the original impressiveness; we left the narrow, overshadowed streets, and sought the great square near by. It was a fine, open space, with borders of trees about it, and some good, substantial old houses—nothing very ornate, that I could make out, in the dim half-light, but it was all open and fresh, and evidently well-kept. The markets are held here, and to-morrow we will see a small one, so I agree to wait in patience. Jacob kept apologizing for the present desertion of the square. He was evidently disappointed with my tepid admiration of the "swell quarter" of the place, for he had given me to understand that such a spot was his dream in case he ever got rich (on petroleum shares, I fancy). We would just have a glimpse of the old gateway near the square, on our way home. The moonlight did all it could to silver it with a romantic shimmer, but it didn't shimmer itself into anything very impressive, for all that. It had just been newly painted, as I soon discovered, while fondly patting its rounded sides (after the manner of callow antiquaries). One might as well try to shake hands with it!

"Surely, Jacob, this is not a very old gateway? it looks so new and fresh."

"Oh, dot's de baint—you got zome on you kloff—but you bet she is old, dese gate! She is ever so many 'ondered year old, if she's a day;" and he blew his nasal trumpet-blast on his check bandanna mainsail, and stood to his gate as if he were the defiant warder thereof. "We will zee it better in de morning, and you will zay wot an ole gate she is; and den you see dot oder gateway dere—de 'Deffil's 'Ouse'—and you see if you don't zay dot she's ole enough, too. Besides, *I* know de deffil is an ole gate'ouse, anyway, because I've always been tole so!"

There was no arguing with such convictions; and, as it was getting rather late, and the old boy was growing tired and testy, we just strolled on home by way of the river, sitting down under the trees for a while, to give him a rest, and enjoy the broad, moonlit river. The rising mists from it made the moored shipping look thin and weird; their twinkling lights wavered in snaky reflections on its slowly swirling tide. I thought of a certain broad river miles and miles away, and in less than two minutes began to turn sadly homesick.

"Take me away, Jacob. This will serve for our first evening at Arnheim." There is nothing like a cosey, well-kept hotel to neutralize a tendency to nostalgia. Ours was most comfortable and amusing. The landlord knew Jacob like a first cousin (as usual), and there was no lack of attention and kindness on his part or on the part of his amiable household.

The next day was somewhat showery and blowy. We went out all the same, and enjoyed it. There are certain effects and incidents out in the rain that one never sees the like of, for quaintness, in fine weather; scurrying groups of figures, with "clinging draperies," swishing with the wet. There are always friendly porchways to get under and out of it yourself; or sometimes, better still, one can find a convenient café "giving on" the biggest crowd in the square; there may be an unoccupied table by the window nearest the street, and, by ordering a few cups of coffee and a cigar, you have a splendid chance to sketch for hours unbothered. We often did this, as we got rest, refreshment, and shelter all at the same easy rate. And the waiter will not mind you if you tip him with a few mixed metals of the coinage. I once bought a new sketch-book (in fact, we were always buying new sketch-books, Abbey and I—the Dutch paper is so enticing and cheap), and I stood by the window of the shop to try it on a passer-by. The obliging bookseller offered



THE DEVIL'S HOUSE.

me a chair, and I sat in that window bay all the afternoon, and half filled that book, and bought a few more. Rainy days are the best fun going, in a crowded Dutch market-place. A railway station is a lovely place, too, to catch the fleeting types of costume and character; they sit and stand about at your mercy, waiting for their trains. One has only to get a corner seat, and his back well jammed into it, so that he can't be overlooked, and, my word for it, there is good sport to be had.

The evil-reputed, grim "Devil's House" stands in the square, just back of the cathedral. I was prepared with my most sympathetic shudder, after all the tales I had heard of it. We had come upon it unawares to me, and I found myself walking in and out under the archway, trying to catch a bit of over the way, and be out of the rain. My bit finished, I looked about me for the first time, and I then began to suspect that the huge, hideous caricatures of the "mortal enemy," each holding a mass of overhanging doorway on his wicked, horned head, and grinning a grin of acute suffering, rather than menace, to affright the average child of man, was the "arch-fiend" himself. I began to suspect, also, some dreadful flash of humor in the bygone builder of the house, in thus making him support his character of *arch-fiend*. There may be some grain of authority, in some of the musty records of the old Town-hall, for this free surmise on my part, and to think that I had no time to run over the Town-hall archives and find out! Any way, joke or no joke, there they were, the poor devils, and had been for centuries, grinning under their load of ponderous arch, for their sins. The good people of the town were in no way disposed to treat the effigies with scorn or contumely; in fact, they had given them every kindly care that images could expect. Each long-enduring demon had just had the fresh ointment of healing putty jammed into his gaping wounds and cracks, and his parched and scaling hide treated to

a salve of fawn-colored paint; and both the devils and the archway, and even the whole house-front, shone again from the effects of that restoring agency. I stood under the porch and sketched it, and various other things, and managed to imprint a large blotch of fresh fawn-color on my shoulder, and that was about all the awful impression the house of the demons made on me. It has a long and grisly history. I went into it no farther than the various guide-books could take me. It seemed veiled in more mystery than I had time or desire to fathom just then. I shall always think pleasantly of the awful house, on account of its kindly, sheltering archway, so useful to me on that day of drizzle and damp. I could there gather in the picturesque passer-by when the figure happened to be worth while, which was not often. There is not much in the way of distinctive dress to be noted, especially among the natives. Down along the quays, among the sailor-folk, a few stray mariners from far-off Zeeland or Duiveland may enliven the scene, but most of the others fail entirely. Even the street urchin is far too conventional to waste a second glance on. The marketplace had a few rustics of an amusing pattern from the surrounding country, but, at the best, nothing to begin with the most ordinary in a Zeeland market-town.

The next day was not only rainy again, but it was Sunday; and though that day is rather a restless than a restful one in the Low Countries, bringing out gay groups of holiday-clad people, sporting their best old family plate in their filmy lace caps, and jewelled heirlooms about their ample throats, and swinging in their rosy ears, here, somehow, most of the people seemed to think such gauds "bad form," and only made a doleful parade of sober blacks or sad grays, and jackets of the fashion before the last. There was scarcely a bright green, or even the most modest scarlet, or retiring light-blue, umbrella, to give

a bit of point to the color of the slowly moving groups, smoking their way to church, or back from it.

Down by the river, however, there were the inevitable groups of Sunday anglers; rain, nor hail, nor fear of scandal awed them in the least. They seemed a sociable set among themselves. There was no seeking out a retired spot, and each selfishly trying to lure away his neighbor's gudgeon. They got



WET SUNDAY AT ARNHEIM.

closely together in pleasantly arranged groups, and chatted and laughed, and tangled each other's lines, and lied enormously, no doubt, about the fish they caught "the other day," and seemed to rather enjoy the rain than not.

Now and again the sun would struggle through the shifting skeins of drizzle, and turn to golden haze the vapor from the slow, dun-colored stream, and light up with a wan blush the

sere and yellow trees across the river, on the flat, green meadows beyond. It formed no bad background for the eager groups of fishers, with their waving rods at every angle against the sky and water. Jacob sadly wanted me to drive out into the country, to some wood, or "bosch," but I too keenly remembered a certain drive through a certain Prince's Wood on a damp, autumn day to wish to try such joys again. He then suggested the old town of Nijmegen. On that very day they would celebrate, with all their remaining vigor, the closing carnival of a week's kermesse.

Alas! I had a too sorrowful remembrance of just such a pow-wow at Purmerend the year before to spring to this proposal at once. A year, however, is a long time to harbor animosity. I had often laughed, during that time, over some of the wild scenes of that long, rackety night. Months afterwards, while, "deep in the velvet sinking" of a luxurious couch near to gilded ball-room, I watched the twinkling flash of dainty satin shoes, mingled with the larger and more sustaining effort of manly patent-leather, "chasing the weary hours with flying feet," to the strains of the Coldstream Band, suddenly there came the wild refrain of that pandemonium of a fair at Dutch Purmerend — "Le Beau Nicholas." I could but smile a smile of kindly greeting to it; I could hear the lusty Dutch voices shouting, howling, hurling out the words in broken French, "*Nicko-lar! NEEK-o-laar! Ah-ah-ah!!!*" that rent the maddened air all that wild night. How lovely it seemed now, as it spun about the swishing coat-tails and lace frillings in that swift "gallop." And to think how those wildly prancing North Dutch revellers had tried to splinter the floors with their great clogs to every salient note of it! It was not far to Nijmegen; we could be there in time for luncheon, and see the town and such of the kermessing as we liked, and then, if need be,

escape the terrors of the inevitable midnight racket by taking the train to Bois-le-Duc. I felt that I was not doing quite all my duty to Arnheim, for I had heard that the surrounding country is simply delightful. I consoled my conscience with a short mem.—“Do this place another time, earlier in the season.” And then we gathered our belongings, and trained off to festive Nijmegen. It was not very far, but it seemed hundreds of miles away in differences of character and people.

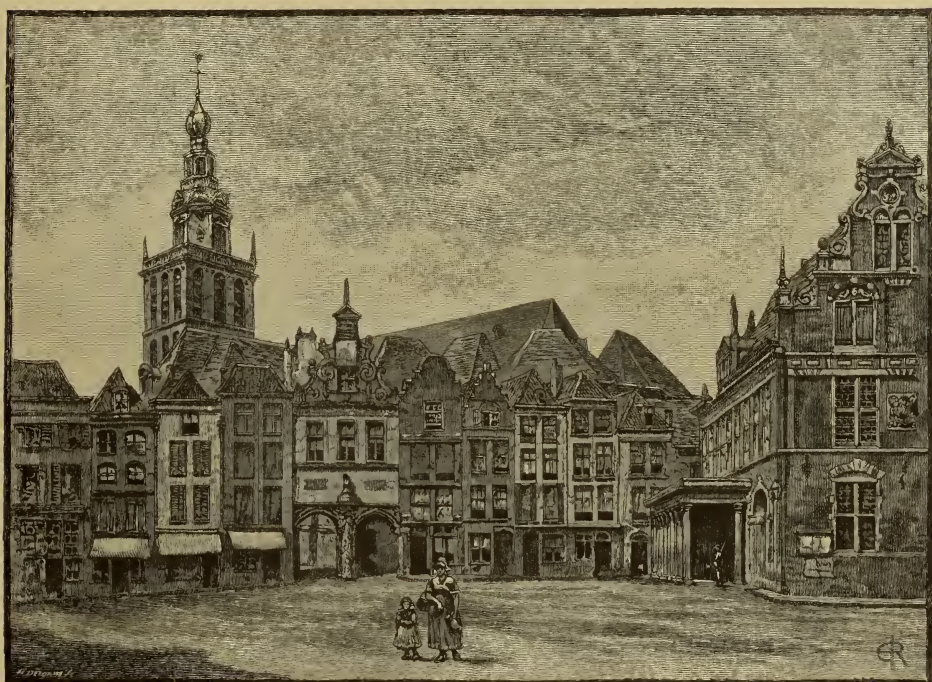
There was not the same “form” and primness, the same devotion to starch and brilliantine, or even to clothes-brush and hair-brush, in Nijmegen. Perhaps it was hardly fair to remark these things without crediting the good folk of Nijmegen with a whole week’s “jubilation.” The town itself looked messy, and “traipsed” with clinging, greasy mud of a sandy yellow. This sad condition of things also needs an apology, and, I might say, a sigh of regret. They were laying shovel and pick and blasting-powder to the ancient walls and ramparts of the town. Bastions and towers and gateways and moats were disappearing in dust and mud. They were toppling over their ancient and honorable defences into the weedy ditch, and filling in the stray holes with any extra rubbish to give it consistency and flavor, and then smoothing it all nicely down, and planting wispy trees, and setting out some chilly iron seats, and flattering their stupid but honest souls with the idea that the new boulevard they were making would break the hearts of the modernizing burghers of Arnheim or Bois-le-Duc.

For myself, I have shed all the tears that I can spare over this kind of vandalism. I am getting so used to it in Holland that I merely say over to myself, “Good frend, for Iesus’ sake, forbear!” when I see the pick and shovel stirring up the time-honored dust, and moving the ancient brick and stone.

It was a splendid day for fleeting effects of light and shade,

for wind-blown movement and unstudied action. How the vivid umbrellas were fluttered about, and the beribboned caps and gay kerchiefs flapped in the breeze! and how jolly and good-natured they all were!—not a little tangled and battered and high-tinted after their week's hilarity, some few of them, but still even those seemed to have a good stock of endurance left. Whenever the pulse of revelry was likely to beat a little slowly, there was always ready a fresh influx of new blood to be let into the veins of fun. The train we came by was brimming over with a merry crowd from the country round, eager to let out its rich flow of pent-up animal spirits wherever the revels might seem to lag. The refreshment-booths were full; there was not much noise; every one seemed quietly laying in a supply of "motive power" for the midnight fandango, or to repair the lost tissue wasted in the whirling fray of the previous night. The choice spirits of Arnheim and the roystering lads and lasses of Bois-le-Duc had evidently come in force to dance for the palm of endurance with what was left of the revellers of Nijmegen. There was a fine touch of the old fire of mediæval rivalry of town and town in it all; but it was rather sad and sinful on the whole. I felt as if I had gone knowingly out of my way, from peaceful, quiet, prim Arnheim, on purpose to be shocked. The only concession I could well make to any outraged sense of propriety was to get out of the thick of the revellers as soon as I had satisfied a modest amount of shocked curiosity. We went to an excellent and quiet place for lunch—the Hotel Boggia, in the market square, the landlord speaking excellent English. After that we strolled around the outer fringe of the fair and into some of the old churches, and some of the civic buildings in the by-squares. The old Town-hall is very picturesque, and is mostly uninjured in its best portions of ancient work. The old houses in the streets are very numerous

and good ; in fact, some of them strikingly so. The town slopes upward from the river Waal to what is quite a notable hill in these parts. We mounted this, up a straggling, tree-shaded street to a fair "outsight," looking over miles of level, river-laced country. There is an old watch-tower on this hill, of rather good lines, and generally picturesque. We sat on a convenient



NIJMEGEN.

bench by the tower, and looked down upon the tree-shaded river and town. Nijmegen was seemingly rich in parks and gardens, and the whole panorama was warmed and gilded with the bronzed tones of the October foliage. The distant hum of the fair seemed like the buzz of some great hive of bees, and it was far more restful. There was a certain sense of enchantment lent to the murmur of the far-off throng by the wide in-

tervening stretch of russet-leaved tree-tops. There was a promise of something to note down by the river-side, where a couple of large ferryboats were plying to and from the other shore with more revellers for the kermesse. We wended our way to the river to see about it, naturally. The boats were not things to enjoy, but the passengers were, many of them, a rare treat. I regretted to note that a few had already been "treated," and not wisely, and too well. They were all happy, however, and good-tempered, even to a fault, if one may find a slight error in their ways.

The Dutch are so genial and industrious and "decent," generally, that one can afford to come upon a kermesse (especially if he goes out of his way to it) now and then, and look at the jovial side of their picturesque carouse, much as Teniers and Brouwer did.

The ferry amused us until it was time to ramble over to the station, along the sad line where the ancient donjons and ramparts were grovelling in the fosse before the coming steam tram and the asphalted promenade. The train had just arrived from some near-by town, gorged with jubilant kermessers; and, as they streamed out of the station and went prancing townwards, I was tempted to chant, with the old cynic in the comic opera:

(Aloud)

"Happy villagers, *dance* away!!

(Aside, with glee)

Too much exercise brings on cramp,

Fits, convulsions, sudden death!"

CHAPTER XXV.

BOIS-LE-DUC.

IT was a quiet ride to Bois-le-Duc, or "S' Bosch," as you might say, if a native. We arrived at the Golden Lion just in time for its "dable d'ote," as Jacob fondly hoped we would. That worthy had not been enjoying the day at all. I fancy that, by dint of showing the kermesse to the wandering tourist too often, he was getting weary of it himself.

Although a quiet place is usually grateful after the turmoil of a fair, I must say that Bois-le-Duc is too much of a change. The silent churchyard would not seem very cold and lonesome after an hour or two of the chill, stagnant, lifeless air that hung over and about us on that sad, grewsome evening.

The squeak of the fiddles and the general racket still sung in my ears; perhaps I ought to have been glad of the buzzing echo, as it kept my thoughts from being loaded down by the all-pervading gloom of that ancient inn. It was old enough, but it had been robbed of all the charm that comes of antiquity. It was a senile, weak old inn, with foolish stairways and doddering, dim passages—clean enough, and tolerably well kept, and the people sufficiently willing and attentive; enough of everything except the charm that should go with its "period." When the sad, serious table d'hôte had run its courses, the depressed guests produced their damp, green cigars, and favored us with a generous stifle of acrid smoke. They meant it all kindly and sociably enough, but we did not care to join in the

general reek. The chill outside air was as near the point of complete saturation as the hygrometer could arrange it without a deluge. However, we ventured out into it for a change of atmosphere. There was a brilliantly lighted café open, and in there we turned to take our coffee, and to see such life as might be stirring. The waiter, as a delicate compliment to me, brought a London paper, weeks old. I read it all, with an approach to wild joy. We then sought our chilly inn. Jacob had had the happy forethought to order a fire in the great, rambling bedroom, and, as we opened the door, it was worth anything as a cheering surprise. We sat down before it for an hour or two, and Jacob actually warmed to himself again, and told me a few "vonny chokes" as a pleasant wind-up to the dreary evening.

The next day was a kind of market-day for butter and eggs, and other good things, from the fat farms about. The sun was dispersing the clinging mists, and things generally were emerging from their chill dulness. The streets were alive with movement and color, and pleasant with busy chatter. Jacob was beaming as brightly as the rosy morn itself; he had discovered that our host was uncle to a cousin's brother-in-law, or some such involved kin and kind, and we were to have such a breakfast to ourselves in a little private room "as will mek your eye wotter." We would just take a turn around the market square. Would I go and see the pigs or the butter? I thought the latter might best suit the dainty whim of an early morning appetite, for savor and suggestiveness of color. Besides, it was farther away, and would give us more of a trot. It turned out to be the freshest, crispest, dewiest-looking array of the fat o' the land that one could well see anywhere. There were rows of brilliantly clear pink-and-white complexioned dames and damsels, with great flat baskets of golden butter, the deftly patted and stamped rolls just peeping out of the neatly folded snowy napkins, and

all cooled on beds of fresh green leaves. More flat baskets of new-laid eggs, so new that the shells looked the *mat*-color of a white rose.

The market-women were mostly inside the market proper, but many were out-doors, under great tent-like umbrellas of fine positive reds and blues. They are, perhaps, inordinately vain of



OLD GATEWAY IN NIJMEGEN.

their great spreading lace caps (and often is the lace of good old "point"), and their long pendent ear-rings flashing in the sun; their fat, pink hands, folded patiently over the handles of their baskets, are ringed heavily with wide hoops of barbaric gold. Broad necklets of coral or deep garnets are clasped about the throat with archaic clasps, often set with precious stones. Many of them had brushed the morning dew from the fields, tramping

here with the produce of their snug farms. They were all bright-eyed and merry and strong, and all too much engaged, I found, with the serious pursuit of selling butter or eggs, to mind being sketched, in the least.

What a different-looking Bois-le-Duc from last evening, and what another sight after yesterday's revel! It was like a breath of pure, crisp air after a stifling room. When we had discussed the promised "little breakfast," which was really a picture of sparkling freshness after the stodgy table d'hôte of the night before, we went back to the butter market again. Somehow, the first freshness seemed to have gone off everything. The dew had dried from the hems of the manifold and ample skirts of the dairy-maids, and their crisp produce seemed wilting under the blare and heat of the throng. I hastened away before the first crisp impression on my memory wilted also.

There was an odd corner of the market-place for "antiques" in the shape of odds and ends of all sorts of dejected rubbish. All of it had been carefully sorted over by the keen eye of the small experts, and there was nothing left, even for the most simple and confiding beginner in bric-à-brac. There was much clanging and booming of the many church bells every few minutes, which reminded us that the splendid old cathedral was far better worth our seeing than the turmoil of the butter market. I remembered, too, that we were in the very thick of the cream of Catholic Holland, in the capital of Brabant itself, which has always been the stronghold of the faith in the Netherlands. All through Protestant Holland the great churches and the cathedrals are generally the most bare and uninviting temples that one can imagine, but here they seem living, fervent things. There is no mistaking the spirit of devotion and earnest faith one sees here on every side, whether one believe in it or not. There is always some grand old music to hear, and generally

something picturesque and impressive in the way of ceremonial to see. It was pleasant wandering in and out as one listed; the great baize-covered door was always swinging to and fro, and crowds meandered in and out, as if the church were part of the highway. The building itself is one of the most important in size and architectural claims of any of those of the Netherlands. It is not so very old, as churches go, being built in the early fifteenth century, but it looks so crumbled and mumbled by nibbling Time, that one would not be surprised (except judging from its style) to hear that it was many hundreds older. The stone of which it is built is so soft and sandy that it seems powdering away at every blast of wind. There are some very good bits of wood and stone carving inside, but there, too, the stone is gradually being dusted away by the very action of the air upon it.

From out the dimly lighted fane, filled with musky incense, and the thrill of young singing voices and deep organ tones, into the sunny air again, we wandered towards a park-like place, and sat under the tall trees. We were on part of the old battlements, commanding a sweep of the surrounding country for many miles. It was a low, swampy waste, too, most of it—so low and watery that for many of the rainy months of the year it will be like a vast, shallow lake, entirely surrounding the town. It was then fairly dried up, and I hear they have done much to drain it in late years. It was all very picturesque and agreeable, in arrangement of pool, canal, and river—a joy to the soul that is above fears of malaria. There are some good old gateways and parts of the old defences still standing, and I really fancy that, as yet, they are unthreatened with improvement. The Town-hall is a good, worthy edifice, with no direct claims on our gratitude for anything in the way of delightful architecture.

The imposing design of it had evidently inspired much admiration in its day and generation, but it was a poor time for architectural inspiration just then. It contains some fairly good old tapestries on the walls of its council-chambers, and some mildly interesting old portraits on its walls. There is a rather restricted museum on the premises also, consisting mainly of corporation relics, badges, insignia, keys, plate, and some ancient parchments, some bits of armor, and a few flags and banners—nothing very old or startling. In the other departments, at the top of the building, in rooms that look like best front-attic bedrooms, there is a very complete and blood-thirsty-looking array of instruments of disgrace, torture, and death. In good old troubled times they seemed to be rather fertile in fantastic inventions for making misery and death as acute and shameful as possible.

The Inquisition in Brabant in those sweet days was evidently most enterprising and painstaking. There was nothing new or interesting in engines of torture that they were not cheerfully disposed to encourage with a fair trial. We were shown over the place by an old lady custodian, who looked like a picture by Franz Hals. It was a nice, kindly face, with a wisp of gray hair pulled back under her tight-fitting cap. She only wanted a large crimped ruff or a white, smoothly-folded pinner to have made her perfect. She did not make as much of the tapestries and the civic silver as she might have done; she was evidently reserving herself for the pretty playthings above stairs. After an earnest confab with Jacob, that worthy turned to me with real glee in his eye:

“She zay dey got oop-stair de biggest collaksin of dose ma-sheen wot dey use to ax-e-koot peebles wiz in ole times, wot you don’t find in all Holland. S’e zay dot de strangers com from all ofer de worl’ to zee dis collaksin, an’ de all zay dis is de *nigest*.”

The taste in these fearsome things has evidently not entirely died out, and yet I never heard of a private collector of such bric-à-brac. It was, indeed, a large and varied show, many of the things having quaint pet names. The old lady explained many of them to Jacob with much glee, and to that worthy's intense delight. One, a half-tub-like contrivance, with a hole the size of a person's head through the bottom, was explained as the "new cloak."

"Dese masheen was worn by any womans wot was took in adulteration. She was marched droo de streets, and any one wot like can trouw dirt and rodden aig at her. S'e has 'er hans tied pehine 'er pack, so dot she can't zay anything to help 'erzelif."

"And how about the *other*? What did they devise for *him*?"

Jacob translated to the old lady, who seemed enormously tickled at the simplicity of the question. She gave some explanation to Jacob, of an amusing character, and they again laughed in concert.

"S'e zay dot 'istory don' zay motch of de oder vallow—beraps he ron away; berhaps de 'osband of de woman wot wears dot, he just kick 'im wen 'e zee 'im—s'e don' know."

As there seemed no use in pursuing this subject further while my informants were in so frivolous a state of mind, I turned my attention to other objects in the room. There was nearly every well-known, and, to me, several quite unique, instruments of devilish device. The mere sight of them was enough to make the flesh creep. I liked them not enough to note down their vile names or uses.

In place of the usual wheel on which the offender was broken, there was a large framework of cross-barred planks with rings at each corner, to pin down the outstretched limbs, and a

thick iron collar to confine the throat. It had evidently been used more than once, and there, beside it, was the crooked iron bar that did the fearful work. The good lady, with the kindly Franz Hals head, was evidently used to showing off the uses of this awful crowbar, as she could swing it with considerable ease and effectiveness—she nearly took the top of Jacob's hat within the radius of one flourish of it; but that was his fault for not keeping a watchful eye on the bar. It was well meant, her little entertainment, but it was rather too realistic. I did not care to have the *garotte* explained in all its sickening details; even the branding-irons were too strong for the jaded senses. "We will come again some other day, tell her, Jacob. I didn't know the collection was so large and awful." It was a real relief, even the air of that market square, that has seen in the eventful past some of those same rusty engines of torture and death at work in awful earnest. How pleasant to me seemed, by contrast, the cluck of the cooped fowls, and the querulous squeal of the penned pigs! they were the only victims for whose blood the chaffering, higgling crowds were clamoring. We turned off from the mart down to a long, tree-lined quay. There was a good show of movement and traffic up and down. Bois-le-Duc is not a "dead city" evidently. We sat down on a shaded seat for a while, to watch the unloading of a brick barge. This work was being done by a gang of about twenty lusty women. They had to run up and down a rather steep incline from the low-laden boat to the top of the high embankment, with a creel of bricks that would have tired many a hod-carrier. They did not seem to mind it; they even wasted their useful breath in superfluous laughter and chatter; their rosy faces were smirched with the inharmonious raw reds of brick-dust, but they were happy. I was allowed to sketch them in peace, for a wonder; they were too busy to wish to look on, or even to shy a section of brick

in our direction. It was a scene of picturesque, and often statuesque, poses, of strong, striking, but mostly unlovely, movements.

If a Watteau nymph could come to life, and step from her sylvan groves, in her glow of satin and snow of filmy lace, to this scene, how her peach-and-cream flesh would shudder, her arched *nuque* bow, and her violet eyes hide behind her azure fan, when she heard that these were but lowlier sisters of her own race. And yet, if a worthy picture could be painted of this scene, as I saw it, how well it would hang beside a good Watteau!

CHAPTER XXVI.

MAESTRICHT, AND HOME AGAIN.

THERE was much in Bois-le-Duc to tempt me to stay longer, but there was a still stronger attraction towards distant Maestricht to tempt me onward. We, therefore, took the early train next day, and the slow—though, for the matter of that, the express itself, in Holland, leaves nothing to desire in the way of quiet deliberation. The ordinary slow train had for me two advantages: it would stop at nearly every station, and I could look about me; besides, it was cheaper, and consequently better filled with the people of the country. We nearly always went second or third class for this very reason, and were always, in certain respects, the better for it; at least, I found my note-book the fuller for it. In our second-class compartment, on that day, there was a delightful old couple, she in full North-Holland bravery, with the inevitable modern bonnet stuck on the top of her national head-gear, of course, but the head-gear by itself was lovely; great filigree gold pendants, hanging from the golden bosses at either temple, a broad blade of chased gold set with scrolls of brilliants across the forehead, and over it all a flowing cap of old Flemish lace.

I was missing something of the country through my interest in our fellow-travellers. The cottages were not so flourishing as those we had left behind us, or the land itself quite so fat and fertile as the best, but it was all very pleasant and tidy. The fields were filled with workers, mostly



A TILLER OF THE SOIL.

women, of course, digging, delving, harrowing, weed-burning, manure-spreading, cutting cabbages, and sacking the potatoes. We waited for a good two hours at a way station—I forgot to note its name. I struck out into the country roads, and made a few notes of the lusty field-hands, who lend themselves so easily and well to the sketcher's needs. The landscape itself was here rather more Belgian or even French in character than Dutch; the low white cottages with the thatched roofs, the tall wispy trees with the tuft of sparse foliage atop, the shapes and colors of the distant church towers and spires, the blue blouses of the men, the close caps of the women and children, were good enough, but not quite like Holland. The many wayside shrines and *Calvaires* told of a distant race and of faith in the strong ascendant. The closely shaven parish priest was no unfrequent figure along the road, listening to the complaints of the poor, giving spiritual comfort, patting the fluffy heads of the children, and going on his various village duties. We always had a cheery return of our "Good-day" from them, and any information, or pleasant chat, in French that we might desire. I was making a sketch of a little maid, down on her knees, cutting herbage for the rabbits at home, when the good curé strayed upon the scene and took an interest in the proceedings, even so far as to bid her to keep a little quiet, and he would have favored us with her family history if I had had time. We had many changes of scene on that day. It was not all smiling landscape and rich, teeming fields. We passed by miles of bog and swamp, stunted forests of dwarf birch and scraggy pine, and acres of rich peat land, with groups of diggers laboring in the black trenches, and looking as if they were digging so many sappy graves. They were not without a certain impressiveness, such scenes, especially in the waning light of the afternoon, just as the crows were wending their way towards the scraggy wood. The steeling lines of flap-

ping wings, and their rasping, bronchial note, accorded well with the lines and the color note of the picture. We arrived at Wijck, the over-the-river suburb of Maestricht, just as the sun was going down. It gave us the kindly chance of seeing the finely varied outlines of the ancient city under the enhanced value of an evening effect. As we turned to go over the massive old stone bridge we got all the "relative values" of the gray old town, with its fringe of belfries, towers, and pinnacles, its rambling roofs and scrolly weathercocks cutting sharp against the twilight sky. The town itself, dim and blurred with hazy smoke, was reflected in the tawny stream that runs past it. I had not much time to admire it. A hotel-omnibus conductor, chilled with waiting at the station, is usually impelled with a strong desire to show the unexpected guest to his hotel landlady as soon as possible. It did not take us long to see our rooms, order a late dinner, and rush out again to see the last of the rosy light before it faded to ashen gray among the roofs and spires of the old capital of Limburg. We first sought the great square, to see the cathedral, said to have been commenced in the days of the Roman occupation. The ponderous masses of crumbling stone forming the bulk of the structure were built in the fashion of that time, but it looks more like a great work of defence, a citadel rather than a church. The late additions to it, during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, are those that give it its ecclesiastical character. On the wide open square, lined with spreading shade-trees, are held the fairs and kermesse revels. It was at one time the cathedral cemetery, but many years ago they quietly flagged the dead over with their own gravestones, and made the place what it is. Here the old mediæval pageants and processions occurred, and here, during the days of conflicting creeds and faiths, did

"Christians burn each other, quite persuaded
That the apostles would have done as *they* did."



FIELD-WORK.

The old town is far more German and Flemish in its architectural features than Dutch. Jacob always spoke of the inhabitants as "dese here people," and told how far they were behind the Hollanders in cleanliness and other good qualities. They are certainly not so tidy as the other Dutch, or in any way so well worth seeing in a picturesque sense. The outside views of the town, the old walls, and the gardens straying down to the river, the quaint shipping, and all that, are quite fine, and well worth coming to see. The churches, and the old gate called "De Helpoort," are entirely worthy of the student, if not too far out of his way; but for all that it has to show of strictly Dutch character, the sketcher in that direction had better keep to Haarlem, Middelburg, and Dordrecht. For all the combined good qualities of a fine old Netherlandish town, such as churches, houses, shipping, people, and country round about, I should say that Dordrecht would take the medal. I fain would have gone there again on my way home, for at last I heard of my vagarious companion of last year, as being there, among a set of hard sketchers stopping at the "White Nag." But my own time was up, and I made the interesting bit of country between Maestricht and Flushing a sacrifice to my need to be at home. I parted with the faithful Jacob at Roosendaal; it was all I could do to prevent him from straying with me down to Flushing—"To mek shoor you kitz de right boat." He was so used to looking after the bags that his last look at them was one of doubt if I would not walk off and leave them behind. There is still a very large portion of Holland's best part that I have left unseen, and much I would gladly see again. My last impressions of the country, as we steamed past drenched Zeeland, were that I should like to buy a few spare Swiss mountains and have them ground up and distributed about over the land to raise it a few feet more out of water. This not being immediately feasible, I

could no further help them than by carefully scraping my boots near the steamer, so as not to track off a single ounce of their scant soil to a land not in need of it.



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